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101st plenary meeting
Tuesday, 1 September 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kutesa .... (Uganda)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda items 13 and 115 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

(a) Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Draft resolution (A/69/L.85)

The President: Members will recall that the General Assembly held a debate on agenda item 13 and its sub-item (a), jointly with agenda item 115, and adopted resolution 69/15, at its 51st plenary meeting, on 14 November 2014. Members will also recall that, under sub-item (a) of agenda item 13 and agenda item 115, the Assembly adopted resolution 69/108, at its 65th plenary meeting, on 8 December 2014, and adopted resolution 69/244 and decision 69/550, at its 77th plenary meeting, held on 29 December 2014. Members will further recall that, under the same items, the General Assembly adopted decision 69/555, at its 78th plenary meeting, on 16 January 2015, and decision 69/557, at its 81st plenary meeting, on 5 March 2015.

I am pleased to address this plenary meeting convened to take action on draft resolution A/69/L.85, by which the Assembly would transmit the draft outcome document of the summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda to the seventieth session for adoption during the summit. The successful conclusion of the negotiations, on 2 August, was a fitting culmination to the nearly two years of intensive, inclusive preparations and negotiations. It took a considerable amount of effort, flexibility and a spirit of compromise by all to arrive at this point.

We should all be proud of what we have attained together. The draft outcome document, entitled "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", which world leaders will adopt later this month in New York, is a historic achievement. The spirit with which the draft outcome document was formulated and agreed by consensus is a triumph for multilateralism. We have proved that the global community can work together to address pressing issues facing humankind, while making the necessary commitments for the benefit of all.

I would like to take this opportunity to convey my sincere appreciation to Member States, observers and all stakeholders for their active and constructive engagement throughout the process. I wish to pay special tribute to the co-facilitators, Ambassador David Donoghue, Permanent Representative of Ireland, and Ambassador Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya, for their steadfast commitment in steering the negotiations to a successful conclusion.

I highly commend His Excellency Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his personal commitment and the continuous support provided by the Secretariat

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and by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in particular. I also thank Ms. Amina Mohammed, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development Planning, for her tireless efforts. And I thank civil society, non-governmental organizations, major groups, parliamentarians, the private sector, youth, local authorities, academia, philanthropic organizations and all stakeholders who provided valuable inputs.

By putting the eradication of poverty, improving livelihoods for all, transforming economies and protecting our planet among its core objectives, the new agenda is ambitious, inclusive and transformative. It seeks to leave no one behind. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) — the main component of the new development framework — are comprehensive and address the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in an integrated way.

While the SDGs will be universally applicable, there is also recognition of national circumstances, different levels of development and the needs of countries in special situations, particularly least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and Africa.

As I have underscored before, the task ahead will be to ensure the successful implementation of the new development agenda, once adopted. In that context, integrating it into our respective national development plans, mobilizing adequate financial resources, technology development and transfer and capacity-building and ensuring effective follow-up and review will be critical.

Taken together with the adoption of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the third International Conference on Financing for Development, we now have a comprehensive framework that will support the implementation of the new agenda.

We have to ensure that the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals, which have been incorporated into the Sustainable Development Goals, is carried forward. In that regard, greater attention will be needed in the areas of education, health, water and sanitation, advancing gender equality and women's empowerment, and the creation of employment, among other things. Furthermore, greater investments will be required in many areas, such as infrastructure development, the promotion of inclusive and sustainable economic growth and development, the improvement of productive capacities, and the creation of more opportunities for employment, especially for youth.

The international community and citizens around the world have waited for this moment with anticipation and great expectations. By adopting the draft resolution before us today and transmitting the draft outcome document to the summit for adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, we will have taken an important step towards putting our world on a more prosperous, inclusive and sustainable path. As we embark upon this collective journey, we have to uphold the pledge that no one will be left behind.

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General: Today is the start of a new era. We have travelled a long way together to reach this turning point. For 15 years, our pursuit of development has been inspired by the eight Millennium Development Goals, which embodied our ambition to eradicate extreme poverty and appalling social ills.

Five years ago, members asked me to initiate thinking on a post-2015 development agenda. Two years later, at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, the General Assembly embarked upon a process to craft a set of sustainable development goals — the SDGs — to be at the centre of that agenda. The General Assembly set in motion unprecedented international reflection, consultation and negotiations. All Member States joined in. We asked countless people what they wanted the world to be like in 2030. The General Assembly listened to civil society organizations, academia, the private sector and many others, establishing a new standard for the inclusion of stakeholders in United Nations policy-shaping. Member States spoke to each other and carried on a constructive dialogue. The Assembly overcame differences in the interest of the common good, and after three years of negotiations it reached an agreement, in early August, on a bold vision for transforming our world.

I commend the President of the General Assembly, as well as the co-Chairs of the Open Working Group and the co-facilitators of the post-2015 negotiations, for their extraordinary leadership. Today we are ready to hand over this Agenda to world leaders for endorsement at the summit later this month.

Agenda 2030 aims high. It puts people at the centre of development. It aims to foster human well-being, prosperity, peace and justice on a healthy planet. It pursues respect for the human rights of all people and gender equality. It speaks to all people in all countries and calls for action from everyone everywhere. It aims to inspire and create genuine partnerships among all countries and actors.

This Agenda marks a paradigm shift. It completes the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals, lifts the level of ambition and tackles emerging issues and challenges. It recognizes the close interdependence of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. It breaks new ground in the way it links peace and security to sustainable development, while highlighting the centrality of the rule of law, accountable institutions and access to justice. It presents solutions to deal with root causes of the complex problems in our world today, from migration and conflict to exclusion, violence against women and humanitarian crises. And it prioritizes the vulnerable and marginalized, vowing to leave no one behind.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is an agreement of which the General Assembly can be proud. Its implementation will require all stakeholders to continue to champion this cause. Reliable data and indicators will be essential for measuring progress and making sure our efforts reach everyone.

The year 2015 is a watershed year for putting the world on a sustainable pathway. The financing for development agreement reached in Addis Ababa in July and the efforts to forge a new path forward on climate change in Paris in December are critical elements for the success of our endeavours. Together, they are foundational steps to begin implementing the 2030 Agenda.

They will be followed next year by further crucial steps, including the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul in May, the Habitat III Conference in Quito in October and the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem in April. I urge the Assembly to continue showing the same strong commitment, flexibility and vision it has demonstrated in adopting the new development agenda.

At this month's summit, we expect Heads of State and Government not to only endorse the new Agenda but also to affirm their strong political commitment to its timely implementation. I am delighted that more than 150 world leaders, as well as His Holiness Pope Francis, will join us to start this new era for sustainable development. We must all now act with the utmost ambition and mobilize the maximum political will.

Seventy years ago, the United Nations was born from the experiences and convictions of great men and women who had seen the horrors of war. With the adoption today of draft resolution A/69/L.85, the United Nations will bring the international community to the cusp of decisions that can help realize the founders' dream of a world of peace and dignity for all.

I thank the General Assembly for having taken the world so far on our collective journey towards a better world for all the world's peoples. Let us all now work with determination to reach that destination.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his statement.

Before proceeding further, I should like to make an oral revision of a technical nature to the annex of draft resolution A/69/L.85. In the footnote on page 13 of the document, a reference should be added to addendum 2 of the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (document A/68/970), which includes a compilation of statements submitted by some Member States following the issuance of the compilation contained in addendum 1. The footnote would now read as follows: "Contained in the report of the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals (A/68/970 and Corr.1; see also A/68/970/Add.1 and Add. 2)."

If there is no objection, we shall continue to consider the draft proposal as orally revised.

It was so decided.

The President: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/69/L.85, as orally revised.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.85, entitled "Draft outcome document of the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda", as orally revised.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/69/L.85, as orally revised?

Draft resolution A/69/L.85, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 69/315).

The President: Before giving the floor to the speakers in explanation of position, may I remind delegations that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Mamabolo (South Africa): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

The Group welcomes the successful conclusion of the negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda and the draft outcome document, entitled "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", which was agreed by consensus on 2 August. The Group notes that this is not a perfect document, but it represents a political balance that delivers a meaningful and ambitious post-2015 development agenda that builds on the Millennium Development Goals in order to adequately and predictably address the development interests of all States Members of the United Nations in the true spirit of an enduring global partnership for development. Eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions is recognized as the greatest global challenge there is, and as an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. Importantly, the agenda also recognizes our different national realities, capacities and levels of development, and respects our national policies and priorities.

On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, we would once again like to express our gratitude to the co-facilitators, to you personally, Mr. President, and to the Secretary-General and the entire Secretariat. We are particularly grateful to the co-facilitators for guiding us through this intergovernmental process in an open and transparent way that has given all Member States an opportunity to ensure that their interests and concerns are reflected. We would also like to convey our gratitude to the major groups, including civil society organizations, that have supported our work through this constructive process. I would like to conclude by welcoming the adoption of today's resolution 69/315, which transmits the draft outcome document of the negotations on the post-2015 development agenda to the General Assembly for action at its seventieth session.

Miss Richards (Jamaica): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the 14 States members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). We align our statement with the statement just delivered by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and with the one to be delivered by the representative of Maldives on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States.

The draft outcome document of the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda — entitled "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (resolution 69/315, annex) — is the culmination of months of intense negotiations that sought to ensure that the final document provided a clear and transformative road map to sustainable development in which economic, social and environmental issues would be carefully integrated in a balanced manner. Importantly, the document reflects our strong desire to ensure that no one is left behind. CARICOM wishes to thank all Member States for the spirit of cooperation they displayed, which contributed significantly to the timely finalization of the draft outcome document. We also wish to put on record our commendation of the co-facilitators of the preparatory process, Ambassadors Macharia Kamau and David Donoghue, the Permanent Representatives of Kenya and Ireland, respectively, for their committed leadership and fortitude in guiding us to the conclusion of the intergovernmental negotiations, on 2 August.

We have before us a new development agenda that is truly unprecedented in scope. For the next 15 years, both developed and developing countries will be guided by an inclusive and implementable blueprint that not only reflects the three dimensions of sustainable development but is people-centred above all, with provisions that ensure a whole-of-society engagement as well as the contribution of all stakeholders in a manner consistent with their respective roles, capacities and existing obligations. That sustainable development agenda, together with the recently adopted Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the accord to be adopted in December at the end of the 2015 Paris Conference of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, represents a pivotal step forward for humankind that will, if fully implemented, yield the future we want. Accordingly, CARICOM commits to contributing to a robust, systematic and effective follow-up and review process.

In conclusion, we wish to use this occasion to reaffirm our commitment to this transformational agenda aimed at delivering sustainable development for present and future generations. The CARICOM member States therefore recommend the document under consideration today to their Heads of State for their adoption and endorsement at the summit to be held later this month.

Mr. González Franco (Paraguay): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the 32 States members of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs). At the outset, I would like to congratulate the General Assembly on the progress that has been made so far on the long road we have travelled in our quest for a new development agenda to guide our countries and communities for the next 15 years. We joined others in recommending the adoption of this important draft outcome document (resolution 69/315, annex).

On behalf of the LLDCs, I would like to express our appreciation for the excellent leadership of the negotiation process by the two co-facilitators, Ambassadors Macharia Kamau of Kenya and David Donoghue of Ireland. I furthermore commend member countries for their hard work, and civil society for its active participation and valuable input into the process. The consultations and negotiations were conducted in an inclusive and transparent manner, including all the preparatory work done after the holding of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro.

Being landlocked continues to be a major contributing factor to the high incidence in our countries of extreme poverty, as well as a source of our structural constraints. LLDC economies are vulnerable to external shocks, systemic weaknesses in global trade and its financial and economic architecture and to volatility and contractions in key global indicators. In view of the seriousness and complexity of the challenges we face, I believe it is important to emphasize that landlocked developing countries fully endorse the ambitious and transformational vision set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and recognize that eradicating poverty in all its dimensions is the greatest challenge of our time and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. We share the objectives of promoting a world free of poverty, hunger and disease and one in which human habitats are safe, resilient and sustainable. We reaffirm our commitment to achieving a better world in which every country enjoys sustained, inclusive economic growth and can provide decent work for all.

We appreciate the fact that the new agenda acknowledges that each country faces specific challenges in its pursuit of sustainable development and that the most vulnerable deserve special attention, including those dealing with the unique and special challenges related to being landlocked. We are therefore grateful for the collective commitment that the international community makes in the draft document with regard to ensuring the full implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024. We would like to underscore the complementarity between the goals and targets set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the six priority areas of the Vienna Programme of Action, and to emphasize that the successful and timely implementation of both blueprints will be essential to local, national, regional and global efforts to spur social and economic progress in our countries.

Lastly, the LLDCs reiterate the importance of a renewed and strengthened global partnership for sustainable development that includes South-South and triangular cooperation, as well as cooperation between and among the relevant international and regional organizations, and between public- and private-sector actors. We emphasize the importance of meeting, by all and in a timely fashion, of the commitments spelled out in this draft document. We stress that effective partnership will be crucial in mobilizing and sharing the knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources needed to implement the various goals and targets of the 2030 development agenda and of the Vienna Programme of Action.

Mr. Tupouniua (Tonga): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 12 Pacific small island developing States at the United Nations. We associate ourselves with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Maldives as Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States, and for those of us who are members, with the remarks delivered earlier by the representative of South Africa as Chair of the Group of 77 and China.

We join others in expressing our sincere congratulations to you, Mr. President, and to the co-facilitators — His Excellency Ambassador Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya, and His Excellency Mr. David Donoghue, Permanent Representative of Ireland — for their remarkable and stellar leadership, commitment and passion in steering a transparent, open, fair, balanced and inclusive process that truly has the potential to live up to its promise to banish the scourge of poverty from our midst and leave no one behind.

The Pacific small island developing States are pleased to play an integral part in setting the historic legacy of a truly universal and sustainable development agenda process, as we saw the potential for the agenda to meet the specific needs and vulnerabilities of our small island developing States and those in our Pacific islands region. We well know that the road was not easy, and we applaud the spirit of flexibility, compromise and multilateralism that paved the way to where we are today. The dual promises from the agenda, both universal and transformative, set a very high bar. The response of all who took part in the creation of the agenda, both inside and outside the Hall, has been admirable and commendable.

We are pleased to take another positive step towards the realization of the agenda today by taking action to transmit the draft outcome document — entitled "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development — to the seventieth session of the General Assembly for consideration during the summit for the adoption of the agenda. We reaffirm our strong commitment to the draft outcome document, whose universality reflects our deepest concerns about the changing climate, which threatens not only our prospects for sustainable development but also our very survival, as well as an ocean under threat on which we rely for livelihoods. The international community must continue to maintain high ambition in the negotiation process of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, so as to achieve a legally binding climate agreement for adoption at the twenty-first United Nations Climate Change Conference, to be held in Paris, as part of a global effort to heal the health of our planet and to eradicate poverty by 2030.

The commitment we displayed in negotiating this draft document must now be directed towards its full, speedy and effective implementation. We recognize the imperative of national ownership and leadership of the universal development agenda. We must also work, through the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and the United Nations fit-for-purpose system, so as to ensure that the needed programmes, mechanisms and actions on the ground are taken so that truly no one is left behind.

Ms. Al-Thani (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): I speak on behalf of the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, namely, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting to ensure follow-up to the intergovernmental negotiations that led to the draft outcome document contained in the annex to resolution 69/315, on the post-2015 development agenda, to be adopted during the upcoming United Nations summit to be held from 25 to 27 September. We would also like to thank the Permanent Representative of Ireland and the Permanent Representative of Kenya for their effors to facilitate the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda — negotiations that lasted for more than two years.

The Gulf Cooperation Council engaged with all partners throughout the negotiations. We would like to express our gratitude to all those who contributed to the success of the dialogue and negotiations. We would also like to thank those who devoted time to share their experiences and knowledge with us. The negotiations demonstrated the importance of dialogue and compromise in narrowing differences. In that context, our countries would like to state their position with regard to certain points of the draft outcome document.

With regard to Goal 5 — "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls" — we have reservations about the use of the term "early" marriage. Child marriage is banned by our respective legislations.

With regard to Goal 8, we would also like to state that we have the sovereign right to implement all decisions pertaining to migrant workers.

We also have reservations with regard to all points on reproductive health that might run counter to sharia law.

With regard to inheritance, our legislation respects women's rights. Often, women's share is greater than that of men. We are currently undertaking efforts to safeguard women's rights pertaining to inheritance in line with our national legislation.

We are committed to respecting internationally recognized human rights. With regard to the use of the word "gender", it can refer both to men and women. With regard to "families", we understand that to mean a husband, a wife and children. We regret the absence of any direct mention of families in the draft outcome document and their role in implementing and achieving sustainable development.

In referring to those reservations, I also wish to point out that they were also indicated during proceedings of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development.

Mr. Waheed (Maldives): I have the great privilege and honour to speak on behalf of the States members of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS). We align our statement with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

First, let me take a moment to extend our condolences for the lives lost in Dominica, as well as our concern for all those affected by Tropical Storm Erika, and by Hurricane Danny before it. With Hurricane Fred now developing near Cabo Verde, these are stark reminders of the ever-present vulnerabilities of small island developing States (SIDS) to the effects of extreme weather events exacerbated by the effects of climate change.

I wish to congratulate you, Mr. President, and your appointed co-facilitators — His Excellency Mr. Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya, and His Excellency Mr. David Donoghue, Permanent Representative of Ireland — for their tireless efforts and the superb job that they have done to map a pathway towards achieving not only a concise and robust agenda, but one that is comprehensive, inclusive and implementable. AOSIS worked diligently on this agenda because we desire the creation of a world where poverty and hunger no longer exist; where due diligence is paid to our planet and environment; and where our countries and peoples are resilient and prosperous.

Following several months of intense negotiations and three years of hard work, it was a very fulfilling experience to finally, on 2 August, informally agree on the draft outcome document entitled "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". We were encouraged by the flexibility shown by all, and enthused by the commitment we saw. On behalf of AOSIS, I would like to take a moment to thank all the negotiators and participants in the process, including our partners, the United Nations system and the impassioned members of civil society.

Today, we have taken action to transmit the draft outcome document to the seventieth session for consideration during the summit for the adoption of this robust agenda for our peoples. We again pledge our fullest commitment to making this world a better place where no one is left behind. Implementation is the key to its success. Therefore, we call on the United Nations, our developed partners, civil society, the private sector and all citizens to do their part in ensuring that by 2030 we can realize the true purpose and intent of our agenda.

We wish to take this opportunity to highlight that, for this agenda to be accomplished, we must work together in unity. We must put in place mechanisms that best assist the ones furthest behind, the ones most in need. We have to work in a coherent and cohesive way. That is where we believe that the High-level Political Forum, with the support of the United Nations and the relevant regional commissions, can play an integral part.

For SIDS and other countries in special situations, there should be increased support for strengthening data collection and capacity-building, as well as developing national and global baselines, so that we are better able to identify and respond to this agenda, while also transparently and accurately tracking our progress. We join the call by the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Post-2015 Development Planning, Ms. Amina Mohammed, for developed countries to assist with technology and financing, which represent an investment in our future that will eventually realize the collective interests of the global community. As we all know, delaying action comes at a very high price, so let us not waste this opportunity to change the course of history.

In conclusion, we reaffirm our commitment to realizing the dream of Agenda 2030, to eradicating poverty and to conserving and sustainably using our environment, including our oceans and seas, to truly transform our world.

Mr. Percaya (Indonesia): I have the honour to deliver this joint statement on behalf of the following countries: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, India, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, the Philippines and my own country, Indonesia.

First, we would like especially to recognize and thank the co-facilitators for the relentless efforts and hard work that led to the successful conclusion of the negotiations on the draft outcome document on the post-2015 development agenda, as set out in the annex to resolution 69/315, adopted earlier. We likewise extend our sincere appreciation to the outstanding team that supported the co-facilitators' work.

The draft outcome document was carefully crafted through a long, inclusive process. We now have before us a document that comprehensively incorporates the necessary elements and measures for eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, as well as achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — in a balanced and integrated manner.

However, with regard to the amendments on targets 2.5 and 15.6, related to access to genetic resources, which were introduced during the last phase of the negotiations of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, our countries want to convey the following concerns and considerations.

Targets 2.5 and 15.6 should, and could, have been addressed without making substantive changes to such targets, taking into consideration the fact they had been extensively discussed and agreed by consensus at the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals and endorsed by resolution 68/309. In that respect, the 2030 agenda states:

> "We encourage ongoing efforts by States in other forums to address key issues which pose potential challenges to the implementation of our Agenda, and we respect the independent mandates of those processes." (*resolution 69/315, para. 58*)

Therefore, we reiterate that the amended targets should not undermine the level of ambition of other international agreements.

Targets 2.5 and 15.6 should be interpreted and applied in accordance with the objectives of the Nagoya Protocol, in which the international community agreed, first, on

> "the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies";

and, secondly, to

> "take measures, as appropriate, with the aim of ensuring that traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources that is held by indigenous and local communities is accessed with the prior and informed consent or approval and involvement of these indigenous and local communities".

Fulfilling targets 2.5 and 15.6 is crucial to achieving food security and nutrition, health and the sustainable management of biodiversity. The achievement of the Goals and targets on these issues is essential if we are to fulfil the overarching goal of poverty eradication in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Finally, I would kindly ask you, Mr. President, to ensure that this statement and our understanding on these targets are formally noted in the General Assembly records.

Ms. Engelbrecht (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, I would like to reiterate our deep gratitude to the co-facilitators, Ambassador Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya, and Ambassador David Donoghue, Permanent Representative of Ireland, as well as to the Secretariat, for their tireless efforts to produce this draft outcome document (resolution 69/315, annex), which was the result of many hours of work and intergovernmental negotiations. We must also express our thanks for the coordination, conciliation and cohesion work undertaken by South Africa in its capacity as the Chair of the Group of 77 and China.

We align ourselves with the statement that was just made by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of African States.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, in voting to transmit to the upcoming summit the document entitled "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", would like to express its reservations and clarifications of position on specific aspects and elements in the draft document. Specifically, we would note the following.

First, we have a reservation on the preamble in connection with each instance where it reflects primarily a single vision of sustainable development that is fundamentally aligned with the interests of the Western world, given that the preamble, the first part of a document of such importance, is intended to project a vision of how it wants the sustainable future for humankind to be — even if it contains many positive elements, such as the recognition of combating poverty and inequality as objectives key to sustainable development. On the other hand, the preamble eclipses the recognition of different views, models, strategies and policies that make great contributions to sustainable development.

Mr. Emiliou (Cyprus), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Secondly, we reiterate our reservations on specific targets set out when the final document (A/68/970/Add.1) of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals was adopted. In that context, when our country explained its positions and reservations on the report, we expressed a reservation on the concept of "modern energy for all", as reflected in Goal 7 and in targets 7.1 and 7.b. We expressed those reservations on the concept, as we had previously with regard to the outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference, The Future We Want" (A/66/288, annex), on account of the lack of clarity regarding the concept of "modern energy", including, inter alia, the possible use of new technologies and the necessary assessment of their use in the national context in the light of the national priorities for sustainable development and the relevant legal frameworks and policies.

In addition, Venezuela expresses reservations with regard to target 12.c, as also pointed out at the Rio+20 Conference. For Venezuela, on the basis of its 1999 Constitution, the reference to the removal of subsidies for fossil fuels has an interventionist character in States' public policies. We therefore we do not accept its relationship with any of the Sustainable Development Goals. Venezuela will not accept any kind of evaluation, monitoring, reporting or reviewing of our national energy policies and measures that involve an effect on our national sovereignty. That paragraph, in addition, distances itself from and substantially modifies the lines agreed upon in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of 2002.

Furthermore, we express reservations with regard target 14.c. It is necessary to recall once again that Venezuela is not part of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Our country would have preferred that the text agreed by the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals be retained, as this is a highly sensitive matter for our country that touches upon aspects related to our sovereignty.

Thirdly, and finally, in the section entitled, "Means of implementation and the Global Partnership", we reiterate the reservations and comments made at the time of the adoption of the document entitled "Addis Ababa Agenda for Action", outcome of the third Conference on Financing for Development, and relating to paragraphs 31, 49, 60 and 69 of that document, referring to the removal of subsidies for fossil fuels, modern energy, low-carbon economies and mechanisms for establishing the carbon price, respectively, which are reflected in the current draft outcome document.

Mr. Abdrakhmanov (Kazakhstan): At the outset, let me thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, President of the General Assembly Sam Kutesa and the Secretariat for their tireless efforts to draft what will be the historic outcome document of the United Nations summit to adopt the post-2015 development agenda (resolution 69/315, annex).

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the co-facilitators, Ambassador Kamau of Kenya and Ambassador Donoghue of Ireland, as well as former Ambassador Csaba Kőrösi of Hungary, for their outstanding and visionary leadership of the negotiation process. Under their eminent and capable stewardship, unprecedented open and inclusive intergovernmental negotiations with all stakeholders led to an agreed draft outcome document. The processes whereby the Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda were defined have finally coherently converged into a unified 2030 strategy for sustainable development, with poverty eradication, sustainable development and human rights at its core.

We hope that the success on the first two key 2015 decision points, the third International Conference on Financing for Development and the post-2015 summit later this month, will add to the positive outcome of the third key event — the climate change negotiations — thus paving the way for a new climate change agreement in Paris. We are confident that the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Sustainable Development Agenda and the new global agreement on climate change will provide a strong foundation for action at the national, regional and global levels for poverty eradication and economic, social and environmental sustainability.

This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity that must be seized, with our highest political commitment. Kazakhstan stands ready to offer the best of itself to the joint international effort to realize a new vision for a transformative era that has a significant impact on humankind by facilitating a transition to a truly sustainable, just and equitable future.

Mr. Okamura (Japan): At the outset, I would like to thank Mr. Sam Kutesa, President of the General Assembly, for convening today's meeting to adopt resolution 69/315. My delegation wishes to join others in welcoming the imminent adoption of the historic document entitled "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". I would like to commend the strong and able leadership of the co-facilitators, Ambassadors David Donoghue of Ireland and Macharia Kamau of Kenya, who brought our many different positions together and guided us to consensus. I also commend the strong leadership of the co-facilitator of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, Ambassador Kőrösi of Hungary. Without their tireless and selfless efforts we would not have arrived at this moment here today. I would also like to express our deep appreciation to all the delegations, observers and various other stakeholders engaged in the process for their constructiveness and flexibility.

This has been a long-running process that dates back both to the Millennium Declaration and "The future we want" (resolution 66/288). Japan has been actively engaged in the whole process, and contributed earnestly to the negotiations. The text of the draft outcome document (resolution 69/315, annex) is not a perfect one, since it still includes the points I referred to in Japan's explanation of position at the end of the deliberations of the Open Working Group last year. But overall, my delegation believes we have a good, forward-looking agenda that we can be proud of before future generations. In particular, we are very pleased with the sharp focus on people-centredness, as well as the references to the importance of preparedness for natural disasters, universal health coverage and quality infrastructure, all of which Japan emphasized throughout the negotiation process. We are also satisfied with the document's consistency with the outcome of the third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Sendai in March.

The implementation of this universal, transformative and people-centred agenda will be crucial and very difficult. Japan will make every effort to implement its goals and targets, in cooperation with other Member States, stakeholders and international organizations, so that we can eradicate poverty and transform our world into a sustainable planet where no one is left behind.

Ms. Mejía Vélez (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to express Colombia's satisfaction with today's adoption of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development (resolution 69/315, annex). This is a historic event and the beginning of a new era, as the Secretary-General said. I would like to congratulate President Kutesa and the Assembly for fulfilling their mandate, and to thank the presidency for its leadership in concluding the negotiations and arriving at a consensus agreement on the 2030 agenda for sustainable development.

I would also to join my colleagues in expressing our gratitude to Ambassadors Macharia Kamau and David Donoghue, as well as to Ambassador Csaba Kőrösi, who was there for the earlier part of the process, for their untiring efforts to ensure that the agenda would become the reality that it has now achieved today with the decision to transmit it to the seventieth session for adoption. I would like to thank all who worked day and night on the text before us today. It happened not just through our consensus but also through the participation of thousands of people. I would like to thank the Secretary-General's team, led by Ms. Amina Mohammed, Special Adviser on Post-2015 Development Planning, to whom we owe special thanks.

The agenda is the result of the work of three years, beginning in June 2012, starting with a proposal made by Colombia, at the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro, that we establish goals and targets to address the outstanding issues of the Millennium Development Goals and help to put our planet and its resources on a path to sustainability. To do that, we agreed to create a working group. It began with 30 representatives and eventually became a fully multilateral negotiation process in which all Member States were able to participate, along with representatives of civil society and academia. The United Nations was open to everyone. Today, for the first time, we are looking at a universal agenda that includes the three dimensions of sustainable development in its 169 interrelated goals, which have the potential to change our societies' direction.

Our commitment is primarily to eradicating poverty and hunger; it is strengthened by the commitments in the agenda on protecting the environment by, among other things, transitioning to sustainable patterns of consumption and production. Its implementation includes everyone — indigenous minorities; people of African descent; vulnerable groups such as the elderly, children, young people and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons; migrants, regardless of their migration status, and people with disabilities, among many other groups, including the various forms of the family. Our efforts should focus on the implementation of the agenda, and we know that will be no easy task.

Nationally, regionally and globally, we must find ways to ensure that our institutions can work in a coordinated fashion to design and implement public policies, plans and programmes aimed at achieving the agenda's goals, and that we have coordinated follow-up that can ensure the goals' effectiveness and efficiency over the next 15 years. We also need to establish successful partnerships between the public and private sectors and civil society in every country, and to define the best regional strategies for supporting the agenda's implementation and, of course, the presentation of data in accordance with each region's characteristics and needs.

Thanks to our work in the dialogues in the Economic and Social Council, my delegation is also anxious to see how the United Nations development system will support the implementation of the agenda. As it states, we will need planning, strategic implementation and systematic data and information. We are prepared to continue to work on the process and to be part of this positive effort with the support of all.

Mr. Hahn Choonghee (Republic of Korea): I would first like to welcome today's adoption of resolution 69/315, concerning the historic 2030 agenda for sustainable development. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the co-facilitators for their tireless efforts during the intergovernmental negotiation process, and the Secretary-General and the Secretariat for their enormous support. I also commend the active participation and contributions of all the stakeholders involved, especially civil-society organizations.

Next September, we will adopt a people-centred development agenda that encompasses the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and aims to ensure that no one is left behind. This unprecedented agenda is ambitious and transformative in that it includes the goals that all humankind should strive to achieve together by 2030. The universal nature of the agenda makes it very different from anything we have attempted in the entire history of the United Nations. All countries will have to implement our joint commitment to goals and targets through their national development strategies.

Success in achieving the 2030 agenda will not come from a business-as-usual approach; a changed mindset will be necessary for that to happen. Bearing that in mind, we must contemplate how to successfully achieve the new set of goals. I am confident that we will be able to build on the mutual understanding reached among Member States and all stakeholders during the negotiation process to determine the final details of implementation.

The Republic of Korea, especially in its capacity as President of Economic and Social Council, will fully commit to building a robust follow-up and reporting mechanism, including the modality of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, and spare no efforts for the successful implementation of the 2030 agenda. We will also make use of our unique development experience in sharing how national motivation and passion for change can transform a society from hopelessness to hope, and from poverty to prosperity, which will contribute to the successful implementation of the 2030 agenda.

The 15 years ahead will be a long journey for humankind towards sustainable prosperity, and it will not be an easy one. But as we have learned from the Millennium Development Goals process and the intergovernmental negotiations, it is certain that, with universal efforts by all Member States and stakeholders, we can all achieve our ambitious goals. I would like to assure the General Assembly of the strong commitment of the Republic of Korea to support the realization of our joint vision.

Mr. Mukerji (India): I thank the President for convening this meeting.

We align ourselves with the statements delivered earlier today by the Ambassador of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and by the Ambassador of Indonesia on behalf of the group of like-minded countries, which includes India.

The draft outcome document that we transmit via resolution 69/315 to the seventieth session of the General Assembly for adoption by the leaders who will attend the summit to be held later this month is the culmination of intense work undertaken by the entire membership of the General Assembly over a period of nearly two years. The adoption of the document will be a tribute to the leadership that the President provided and to the most able facilitation provided by Ambassador Macharia Kamau of Kenya and Ambassador David Donoghue of Ireland. Broadly speaking, we are satisfied with the document.

For India and for many developing countries, the vision of the future cannot but have the eradication of poverty as its overarching goal. We are gratified that is in fact the case and that there has been no compromise on the ambition of the agenda either. Its fulfilment, in our view, can allow poverty to be eradicated within the span of a single generation. We are also satisfied with the holistic approach and balanced emphasis on all the dimensions of sustainable development. Our own experience has shown that inclusive economic growth, industrialization, infrastructure development, skill development and innovation are all essential for the eradication of hunger and poverty. We are pleased with the emphasis that has received in the new agenda. It is also a matter of satisfaction that the agenda, while being universal, does not confuse universality with uniformity. It is therefore important that "common but differentiated responsibilities" be recognized as the guiding principle of international cooperation on sustainable development.

I would like to draw particular attention to a matter that has been of prime preoccupation for my delegation. We are very pleased that the technology facilitation mechanism, an important gain from the third Conference on Financing for Development, is mentioned in the draft outcome document. Progress on that matter has been much awaited since efforts were initiated at the Rio+20 Conference in 2012. The technology facilitation mechanism, to be based at the United Nations, has the potential to make it possible for the international community to leverage the incredible and transformative power of technology in the task of poverty eradication. The Sustainable Development Goals, which are at the heart of the 2030 agenda, relate closely to India's own vision of development and speak to the priorities that our Prime Ministers has outlined in our domestic context as well.

In conclusion, we thank the President for the direction provided to the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly. By taking to their logical conclusion the remaining priorities of his presidency, the President will bequeath to the future a legacy as rich, substantive and meaningful — if not more — than that of any of his predecessors.

Mr. Seck (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): The African Group would like to express its sincere congratulations to the President for the outstanding manner in which he successfully conducted the long process that has led us today to an outcome of which we can be proud, namely, the 2030 sustainable development agenda. I would also commend the co-facilitators, our colleagues from Kenya and Ireland, whose tireless efforts greatly contributed to this positive result. I also commend all the negotiators and the staff of the United Nations, beginning with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon himself.

Africa fully endorses this agenda and will spare no effort to implement it effectively, with the great ambition of ensuring that no human being, no people, no group of people or peoples will be left behind. In order to do that, we need to work resolutely to set up an adapted, appropriate and global partnership that will enable us to coherently and seamlessly implement the 17 goals and 169 targets that we have set for ourselves. The agenda is fully in line with the outcome document of the third International Conference on Financing for Development, held recently in Addis Ababa, and with the holding of the upcoming Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to take place in Paris in December.

The African Group is preparing to actively participate and make a positive contribution as we embark upon the long path that the international community has charted to ensure we achieve the world we all want. In that regard, the African Group would like to make the following observations.

The African Group underscores that the contents of the 2030 sustainable development agenda should be interpreted in conformity with national legislation and States' development priorities, cultural and ethnic values, religious contexts and universally recognized human rights, which are crucial.

With regard to paragraph 19 and target 10.2 of the annex to resolution 69/315, we do not consider the phrase "other status" as applicable to the concept of sexual orientation, sexual identity and groups of the same sex, or to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons.

With regard to information and education in the context of sexual and reproductive health services, as referred to under Goal 3 and target 3.7, they must be age-appropriate. The African Group does not think that comprehensive sexual education should be included as part of it. First and foremost, parents have the right to choose the type of education to give to their children — a right enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which must be respected. The use of the phrase "information and education" in the context of sexual and reproductive health-care services must not give rise to a right whereby young children and adolescents have access to any and all services, in disregard for the responsibility of their parents. Nor must it result in an obligation to provide them information or services that are neither lawful nor acceptable at the international level.

With regard to target 5.4, the African Group considers that the phrase "within the household" can refer only to the family. The family, based on a marriage between a man and a woman, is the natural and fundamental unit of society.

Furthermore, with regard to target 5.6, on ensuring that everyone can exercise their right to sexual and reproductive health — as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the various review conferences — the African Group would like to note that, when it comes to interpretations as to how the provisions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are to be implemented and to any that may run counter to national legislation, the African Group would like to state that they must in no way refer explicitly to the idea of sexual orientation, identity and so forth.

The African Group understands that the word "gender", used in different parts of the text, means only sex, that is, masculine or feminine. The use of the phrase "sexual and reproductive health services" and all related concepts in the Agenda should not be construed to be establishing a right to abortion. Therefore, the African Group cannot accept any policy, follow-up, evaluation or reporting of data concerning such a provision in the Agenda that would implicitly or explicitly include the concept of sexual orientation.

Along the same lines, the African Group underscores that the indicators for monitoring the progress made on the agreed goals and targets should in no way undermine, including in the concepts identified, the right of States to formulate their own national policies in accordance with Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations.

The African Group considers that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as all international instruments in the area of human rights and international law, do not aim at standardizing the cultural values of world's peoples. Therefore, the African Group shall implement the Agenda strictly in accordance with its domestic realities and universally recognized human rights, and with full respect for the ethical, cultural and religious values of its societies.

I would be grateful if the text of my statement could be issued as a document of the General Assembly under sub-item (a) of the agenda, entitled "Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields", and agenda item 115, entitled "Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit".

In conclusion, the African Group associates itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Dehghani (Islamic Republic of Iran): I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Permanent Representatives of Ireland and Kenya, co-facilitators of the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda, for their tireless efforts.

We believe that the Agenda for Sustainable Development is a historic and universal document. Its strong commitment throughout the text to eradicating poverty, as the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, will play an important role in achieving all the goals and targets of the Agenda. We highlight the consensus achieved on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, as well as national ownership and leadership, as solid foundations to facilitate the implementation of the Agenda at all levels — national, regional and international.

We re-emphasize the central role of the High-level Political Forum. A solid and strong Forum that is visionary but practical would be in a unique position to support the advancement of the agenda. It should demonstrate the high level of political leadership and guide the agenda in its implementation.

The Islamic Republic of Iran would like to put on record its observations on the following issues.

We reiterate our previous explanation of position and reservations on the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals contained in document A/68/970/Add.1. In our understanding, there should be a single voluntary reporting system, and only by the national governance, based on the principle of national ownership and leadership. As appropriate, input should be sought from national non-State actors, United Nations country offices and the Secretariat.

We would like to emphasize the need for compatibility between the Agenda and the operational acitivities of the United Nations, in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, so as to enable Member States to implement the Agenda. We reiterate that any reporting template and reporting mechanism and their indicators should be agreed and adopted through an intergovernmental process.

Nothing in this document shall be construed to run counter, in any way, to the national legislation, development priorities or the cultural, social and religious backgrounds of the Islamic Republic of Iran. This applies, inter alia, to terms such as "other status", "other groups", "sex education", "gender", "sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights" and "the family".

Finally, we reiterate our willingness and our full engagement in the implementation of the Agenda.

Mr. Sandoval Mendiolea (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Government of Mexico, I want to put on record how pleased we are that today we are transmitting to the seventieth session of the General Assembly the document entitled "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (resolution 69/315, annex) for adoption at the United Nations summit to be held at the end of the month of September. My country welcomes the open and inclusive process by which we have all been able to contribute our experience and our vision. The 2030 Agenda belongs to us all.

The process included the useful contact group in which some countries and other stakeholders participated with Japan in 2011. It was shaped by wide-ranging thematic consultations with international civil society, such as that held by my country in Guadalajara in 2013, by the work of the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and by the excellent report that they produced, and by the inter-Secretariat group that produced the synthesis report (A/69/700) of the Secretary-General. The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development also gave us an important basis for the formal negotiation process of the Agenda.

For Mexico, the adoption of Agenda 2030, after a negotiating process of over three years, will be a historic decision in which the international community is desisting from old paradigms: we have agreed to focus the efforts of all countries on the welfare and fulfilment of all peoples. We are addressing the third pillar of the United Nations as never before.

Agenda 2030 is an action plan for achieving sustainable development and the eradication of poverty in all its dimensions and for attaining a more just and equitable world through social inclusion. The Sustainable Development Goals and their indivisible and interconnected nature are our action plan. For the next 15 years, we will devote our efforts to achieving sustainable and inclusive development, which could not be attained without respecting the rule of law. This Agenda is a great step towards ensuring that every person in every country can live his or her life under the rule of law in which human rights are respected, giving everyone the same opportunities for development.

In that regard, as my delegation has emphasized for over 30 years, the protection of the human rights of migrants, regardless of immigration status, is crucial. The document makes clear that the goals and targets apply to all people, which obligates us to commit to continuing to work to secure, promote and realize their rights regardless of their immigration status. In addition, Mexico stresses that the right approach to addressing the issue of migration is through the human rights of migrants and their families.

With regard to follow-up and review of the Agenda, we expect it to be carried out on the basis of the mandates set out in resolutions 68/1 and 67/290.

We fully support an inclusive and participatory agenda and a revitalized global alliance. The Declaration is the result of an effort in which Governments, parliamentarians, experts, civil society organizations, the private sector and others have put together a coherent transformative agenda.

Between now and 2030, this Declaration, the Sustainable Development Goals and its targets will guide our policy development. Mexico is fully committed to the implementation of this Agenda and will orient its national development and international cooperation programmes to achieve full compliance.

Mr. Duarte (Brazil): Brazil aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and wishes to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

We have come to the successful conclusion of a journey that, building on the legacy of the Millennium Development Goals and Rio+20, has been considered the most transparent and inclusive negotiating process in the history of the Organization. The resulting outcome (resolution 69/351, annex) constitutes a truly transformative set of commitments that are universal in nature and of global application in the light of common but differentiated responsibilities.

I wish to commend the President of the General Assembly, who, together with Ambassadors Macharia Kamau of Kenya and David Donoghue of Ireland, whose work as co-facilitators was outstanding, will have led Member States to adopt by consensus a historic document. Brazil also expresses its appreciation for the recognition of the Rio+20 Conference by the co-facilitators and Member States in their extensive use of its outcome document entitled "The Future We Want" (resolution 66/288, annex), throughout the negotiations of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

My delegation joined the consensus on the preamble of the Agenda. For us, the preamble and the "Ps" neither reinterpret nor redefine the sustainable development goals and the three dimensions of sustainable development. The preamble serves the purposes of communicating the Agenda. The delicate balance that we worked so hard to achieve in the Open Working Group remains intact.

We would have preferred more ambitious and progressive language with respect to human rights. Nevertheless, in our view, this is a people-centred Agenda, even if the text has not encompassed in language all elements of the human rights edifice. We commit to implementing this Agenda for all social and economic groups, including for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people, whether or not these groups and their concerns are specifically stated. We would encourage all members to proceed in the same fashion, so that the principle of leaving no one behind can find real meaning.

Universality is a breakthrough, making differentiation even more relevant, in particular the recognition of our common but differentiated responsibilities. This is a cherished principle for developing countries and an integral part of the United Nations framework for sustainable development agreements to which we are all committed.

The Agenda's paragraphs 30 and 31, on climate change, reflect a reasonable balance based on the possible consensus that could be achieved during negotiations. It encourages political commitment towards an ambitious agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, but does not prejudge the outcome of the twenty-first meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, to be held in Paris.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals lie at the heart of our Agenda. The SDGs include means of implementation in an integrated and indivisible framework for action. Brazil aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of a group of highly diverse countries dissatisfied with changes in targets 2.5 and 15.6, on the sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as per the Nagoya Protocol.

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda is supportive of, and complementary to, goal 17 and the goal-specific means of implementation of the SDGs. The Action Agenda is mentioned in Agenda 2030 in a manner that undergirds their mutual supportiveness while recognizing that each is independent, including in their follow-up. We believe that Agenda 2030 contributes to contextualizing the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

Official development assistance (ODA) is still critically relevant for the implementation of this Agenda. Although we could not agree on a paragraph on ODA, we note that paragraph 43 of the Political Declaration makes an important statement in that regard.

The revitalized global partnership for sustainable development should be democratic, inclusive and participatory and should engage all the relevant stakeholders, including civil society and the private business sector, under conditions of openness, transparency and accountability. The United Nations system must heed the call for greater system-wide cohesiveness and better interfacing with, and accountability to, the membership, while aligning agencies, funds and programmes and the Secretariat with this Agenda, in particular its framework for implementation. We have recognized the central role of the High-level Political Forum in the follow-up and review, and we should commit to improving it, making sure that its resources and support match the ambition of the workload assigned to it. We are very pleased with the progress on the technology facilitation mechanism. It is a small breakthrough in and of itself, a promising initiative for the United Nations that should be nurtured and adequately supported.

Brazil is confident that we have produced a draft document that is worthy of the consideration of our Heads of State and Government at the upcoming summit.

Mr. Fornell (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Ecuador.

I would first like to express my appreciation to the co-facilitators of the negotiation process and to all those who participated in the working groups and to the Secretariat for their commitment and efforts, which resulted in a draft outcome document for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to be adopted by our Heads of State. The document (resolution 69/315, annex), which is the result of a long consultation process, reflects our common perspectives on the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty as the greatest challenge that we face and whose elimination is a sine qua non for achieving sustainable development. It is now our job to work together to implement the actions that will enable us to achieve those goals.

Ecuador would like to express a reservation about target 12.c, in line with the statement made last year regarding the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (A/68/970), and paragraph 225 of the outcome document of the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (resolution 66/288), since they run counter to provisions in Ecuador's Constitution.

I would also like to reiterate the position we expressed on 19 July 2014 when we approved the report of the Open Working Group, namely, that Ecuador interprets target 5.6 in accordance with what has been established by the International Conference on Population and Development, as well as with our Constitution and our national legislation. The Constitution of Ecuador guarantees the reproductive rights of working people, including the elimination of occupational hazards that affect reproductive health, ensuring of access to jobs and job security without limitations related to pregnancy or number of children, maternity and nursing rights and the right to paternity leave. The State of Ecuador prohibits firing working women either because they are pregnant or on maternity leave, as well as discrimination linked to reproductive roles. Our Constitution also guarantees children and adolescents' enjoyment of the shared rights of individuals in addition to those specific to their age. The State recognizes and guarantees life, including care and protection, starting at conception.

I would be grateful if this statement and our interpretation of targets 5.6 and 12.c could be formally included in the record of today's meeting.

Mr. Wang Min (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China welcomes the adoption by the General Assembly today of resolution 69/315 transmitting the draft outcome document on the post-2015 development agenda to the United Nations summit for its consideration and adoption.

As an agenda to guide international cooperation for development for the next 15 years, the post-2015 development agenda is of profound historic significance. The document reaffirms the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, among other basic principles guiding international cooperation for development. While placing continued focus on poverty eradication and other development issues, the document places greater emphasis on the concept of sustainability, stresses the need for balanced development for the economic, social and environmental pillars, provides comprehensive means of implementation and creates a sound mechanism for follow-up and review.

As a continuation and upgrade of the Millennium Development Goals, the post-2015 Agenda gives new impetus to international cooperation for development and lays a solid foundation for a successful United Nations summit for its adoption. The President of the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session, Mr. Kutesa, has personally devoted a great deal of efforts to the intergovernmental negotiations on the agenda, as has the Secretary-General, who has worked tirelessly to ensure the success of the negotiations. It is the most important achievement of this session, and it will go down in history, for which we congratulate the President and the Secretary-General. The co-facilitators also displayed great patience and wisdom during the negotiations, and China is grateful for their work.

We look forward to the adoption of the Agenda at the United Nations summit, so that the international community can sharpen its focus on development issues, guide global development through a new development approach and, in a spirit of win-win cooperation, build a comprehensive and balanced framework for international cooperation for development, improve global partnerships for development and create a better environment for developing countries, with a view to achieving a shared level of development around the world.

China is ready to join others in working tirelessly to implement the post-2015 development agenda and international cooperation for development.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation is particularly pleased with the adoption of today's resolution 69/315. We welcome the ambitious consensus that we have arrived at in order to ensure that our Heads of State and Government will be able to adopt this draft document during the seventieth session of the General Assembly, later this month. We would like to thank the co-facilitators of the process, Ambassadors Macharia Kamau of Kenya and David Donoghue of Ireland, as well as Ambassador Csaba Kőrösi of Hungary. Our thanks also go to the Secretary-General, the Secretariat and the President of the Assembly, as well as to the representatives of civil society, the private sector and academia, for their valuable contributions.

Peru is a country that has worked to meet the Millennium Development Goals, but we are aware that the emphasis they place on the eradication of poverty is not sufficient to bring about the future we want. There are various factors that go beyond the capability of primarily national policies, such as climate change and fluctuations in commodity prices, and that have the effect of making poverty tought to tackle. In many countries such as ours there are still various structural gaps that make it difficult to implement the sustainable development that our citizens deserve and ask for. That is why we are particularly pleased to see social inclusion included as a cross-cutting element throughout the Agenda, and that poverty is understood as a multidimensional phenomenon.

The global challenges that we face today require that we be up to the task through a renewed global alliance for sustainable development on the theme "Transforming our world without leaving anyone behind". That necessarily entails the implementation of a person-focused agenda that incorporates the three dimensions of sustainable development so as not leave anyone behind.

Peru was one of the first countries to propose the idea of a new set of sustainable development goals with universal application to be drafted by the international community in an open, participatory way. We are happy to see that the goal has been achieved; however, we believe that the final goal will be to bequeath to our children and grandchildren a poverty-free and sustainable future. Today the international community can begin to celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations with the hope that it will soon have, for the first time in its history, an instrument at the ambitious level of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Finally, Peru wishes to associate itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on the topic of food security and genetic resources.

Peru is decisively committed to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. We will continue to work constructively at all levels to ensure that the different future we want becomes a reality.

Ms. Bogyay (Hungary): Hungary welcomes the draft outcome document for the United Nations summit to adopt the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 69/315, annex). We greatly value the consensus achieved to transmit it to the summit. The ambitious and transformative package before us represents the best chance to build a people- and planet-centred future with hope, including for future generations, of not only survival but prosperity and general well-being.

Important milestones led to this consensus, such as the formulation of goals and targets in the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development. Hungary was honoured to guide that process together with Kenya. I sincerely thank all Member States and all stakeholders for the ideas, collaboration and trust that my delegation enjoyed. As a result of the successful Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa and of the intergovernmental negotiations under the stellar stewardship of the Ambassadors of Kenya and Ireland, everything is ready for the adoption of the Agenda to put our world on a sustainable path.

Our first and foremost task is to strengthen the authority of the Agenda by adopting it with resounding unity and in its entirety, with a common pledge to jointly turn our words into deeds. Development is action, not words. Our common future is at stake now. Hungary is determined to take on its share of responsibility for ending poverty and hunger, ensuring prosperity for all and freeing the world from fear and want. We believe in creating virtuous cycles by meeting responsibilities and bringing to the common table what we can each offer.

Development is partnership. Implementation should be built on a true global partnership that involves all stakeholders — Governments, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, academia, all walks of life, the North and the South — with a fit-for-purpose United Nations at its centre. First and foremost, development means human development, of the people, by the people and for the people. Only that development in which the people are both the drivers and recipients of development, and where the interests of future generations are safeguarded, can be sustainable. Governments, parliaments and national implementation plans may go a long way towards charting the path, but accomplishing what has to be done will require true involvement and ownership on the part of people, communities and humankind in general.

As I always say, however, to do that we need effective communication at all levels. And we need to translate a complex system of development goals into programmes that people can relate to and be mobilized by. People must believe in this Agenda. Furthermore, they must believe that they are the ones who can achieve it. To that end, we the peoples of the United Nations and we the Member States must start now to translate the abstract vision in an inspiring way in order to mirror the true will and interests of people. At the end, we can achieve only the future that people truly believe in.

Mr. Mahmoud (Egypt): At the outset, I would like to express the appreciation of my delegation for the efforts of the President of the General Assembly in support of successfully concluding the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda. I would also like to congratulate the two co-facilitators of the process, Ambassador Macharia Kamau of Kenya and Ambassador David Donoghue of Ireland, and to commend their commitment and outstanding hard work throughout the process.

My delegation actively engaged in the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda since its inception. We did so out of our firm belief that transforming our lives and ensuring the sustainability of the planet can be achieved only by eradicating poverty, addressing inequalities, ensuring sustainable economic growth, respecting human rights, including the right to development, and empowering women and girls. All those objectives can be achieved only through collective efforts, which we believe the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development embodied (resolution 69/315, annex). We trust that this collective global effort, which builds on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, will never fade.

My delegation joined the international consensus in support of the Agenda. In that context, I would like to provide the following explanation concerning our views on some of the issues addressed in the Agenda.

With regard to paragraph 18, my delegation believes that the right of every State to freely exercise full, permanent sovereignty over all its wealth, natural resources and economic activity must be in line with principle 2 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, which stipulates that such a right must be exercised in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law and that States bear the responsibility to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other States or areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction.

My country underscores as well that the provisions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development must be implemented in a manner consistent with our national legislation and development priorities, as well as cultural and ethical values and religious background, in line with internationally recognized human rights instruments. All terms in the document should be interpreted according to each country's national laws and policies. Follow-up, evaluation and reporting on any its provisions will be implemented according to national specificities.

According to Egyptian law, information and education should be age-appropriate and provided with the prior consent of parents and in line with their right to choose the kind of education given to their children, as recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The use of the terms "information and education" in relation to universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services does not imply any right for young children or adolescents to access any service without parental consent, or an obligation to provide them with information and services that are neither lawful nor acceptable at the national level. Furthermore, the Egyptian Constitution fully observes all internationally recognized human rights instruments, specificaly defining the family as the natural and fundamental group unit of society, composed of a father, a mother and children.

This Agenda calls for leaving no one behind. It is regrettable that Goal 16 omits the issue of ending all forms of foreign occupation and colonial domination. My delegation also believes that both target 16.1 and target 16.3 apply to the situation in the occupied territories in Palestine and other Arab occupied territories, with the full implementation of all the General Assembly, Security Council and Economic and Social Council resolutions on ending foreign occupation and colonial domination in the occupied territories in Palestine and other Arab occupied territories, as well as the application of the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law, including the four Geneva Conventions of 1949, in connection with the Arab occupied territories.

My delegation would also like to highlight its support for paragraph 70, with regard to the launch of the technology facilitation mechanism. We request concrete steps to be taken during the seventieth session of the General Assembly to operationalize the mechanism.

With regard to the part of the Agenda on follow-up and review, my delegation would like to emphasize the voluntary nature of the follow-up and review process and the role of national Governments as the parties primarily responsible for following up. Any conclusions reached at the upcoming meeting of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council on the modalities of the follow-up and review process must build upon the principles set in resolution 67/290.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the President for holding this meeting and to commend his efforts in support of the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda.

The contents of this statement will be provided officially to the Secretariat.

Mr. Fadul Mohamed (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): We associate ourselves with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Senegal on behalf of the African Group and with the statement delivered by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

I would like to thank the President for his outstanding counsel, guidance and oversight of the work on the post-2015 development agenda. All his efforts have led to the success of our efforts. I would also like to thank the co-facilitators, Ambassador Donoghue, Permanent Representative of Ireland, and Ambassador Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya. We appreciate their ongoing efforts and the transparency they displayed in leading the negotiations. I also thank the Secretary-General and his representative Ms. Amina Mohammed. Their efforts have been sincere and have enabled us to reach this historic moment.

We will soon adopt the agenda that will constitute the international, regional and national road map for economic and social development over the next 15 years. My delegation is delighted to participate in these efforts. We are eager to implement the agenda by ensuring that our national agencies are involved in this effort within the framework of our national plan to eradicate poverty and hunger and to provide lives of dignity for our people. We hope that international cooperation and the United Nations system will play a key role in the implementation of the agenda.

My delegation has some reservations with regard to target 5.6, which were stated at the time of the adoption of the report (A/68/970) of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. We renew here our reservations on that target and on any references to it, including at the end of paragraph 19. We will set out these reservations in writing and send them to the appropriate offices of the Secretariat. Moving away from those standards would be counter to international law in its broadest sense, so we are not in favour of such initiatives.

We expect the upcoming summit will be a historic event. We are proud of what we have done over the past 15 years and we pledge to cooperate constructively.

Mr. Hannigan (Iceland): At the outset, allow me to thank Ambassador Kamau of Kenya and Ambassador Donoghue of Ireland, as well as the delegation of Hungary, for the sound management of the processes that have resulted in this historic draft outcome document (resolution 69/315, annex). Under their excellent leadership, we have managed to finalize our work well ahead of the summit. Iceland is also grateful for the invaluable contributions of the major groups, as well as of individuals such as Ms. Amina Mohammed.

Since the preparatory stages of the documents of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro (Rio+20), Iceland has focused on contributing to the substantive areas of gender equality and the sustainable management of natural resources. Today's draft document includes some good language on natural-resource management and the importance of sustainable fisheries for food security. Science-based management of marine resources is fundamental to food security and economic and social development. The management of natural resources has become even more important given the seriousness of land and soil degradation.

The Rio+20 outcome document (resolution 66/288) is one of the key parent documents to the one we have now transmitted to the summit. It has fuller text and will need to be taken into consideration when interpreting the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets. The Goals and targets were written with the aim of being concise and easily understandable to the public. This is positive, but it has resulted in a text that in some places is a mix of previously agreed language and new text. Therefore, with regard to the connection of this document to other processes, Iceland sees paragraph 58 of the post-2015 outcome document as crucial, as well as paragraph 55.

With regard to gender equality and human rights, Iceland is pleased with the many positive aspects of this document. However, with regard to target 5.a, Iceland has consistently pointed out that conditioning certain women's rights on national law is inconsistent with our commitments from the Beijing Platform for Action and the overall spirit of the post-2015 agenda. We also believe it falls well below other existing international agreements and commitments with regard to women's economic empowerment. Furthermore, this target is inconsistent with target 1.4, according to which everyone, including both men and women, is to enjoy those rights. It is therefore our understanding that target 1.4 prevails.

Similarly, we are disappointed with the phrase "as nationally appropriate" in target 5.4, as we believe that recognizing and valuing unpaid care and domestic work is a universal challenge and addressing it will underpin the achievement of the goal on gender equality.

Finally, Iceland regrets that the proposed date for reaching target 3.6, on road traffic accidents, was not amended to become 2030, as in other targets. We have explained our worries that this potentially unrealistic target year could result in lack of enthusiasm if not reached in time. Whatever happens, we urge the international community to keep working towards this target until we reach it.

Mr. Abdallah (Chad) (*spoke in French*): First of all, we endorse the statements made on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the African Group and the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries.

On behalf of my delegation, I would like to congratulate the President of the General Assembly on the conclusion of our work headed up by the outstanding co-facilitators, Ambassador Kamau and Ambassador Donoghue. Their professionalism and dedication have enabled us to harmonize positions so that we could adopt by consensus resolution 69/315, on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. That adoption was also possible thanks to the collective commitment of Member States and the contribution of stakeholders, the private sector, civil society and the United Nations, who, aware of the shared economic, social, environmental challenges, came together to eradicate poverty and implement sustainable development.

For our part, we note with satisfaction that the Agenda contains a number of principles, including shared but differentiated responsibility, respect for the policies defined by Member States and national ownership. We welcome in particular the support shown for the African Union's Agenda 2063, its 10-year plan of action and the New Partnership for Africa's Development, and the taking into account of the priorities of the least developed countries and landlocked developing countries. By the same token, we particularly welcome the recognition of the intrinsic link between peace, security and development, which will allow us to have an inclusive and multidimensional approach to development in conflict and post-conflict countries.

We also commend the pursuit of aims and objectives in the Millennium Development Goals that have not been achieved, which remain high on our agenda. Important goals linked to economic development have been borne in mind, in particular the crucial need for our countries to sustainably invest in infrastructure, agriculture and pastoralism, thus contributing to improving the lives of people. For our delegation, the reference to industry in the goals is one of the main challenges for the African continent, which needs to transform its huge potential in natural resources on the ground to help its development and better meet the needs of the more than 2 billion Africans that we expect to have by the year 2050.

Recognizing the energy gap that needs to be bridged, we consider that the goals in the Agenda will undoubtedly contribute to providing energy coverage for our countries. While making the link between the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, adopted at the third International Conference on Financing for Development, we note in particular the important recommendations set out in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy for All", which focuses on investment in the various renewable energy sources in order to reduce the burden of climate change (A/69/395). With a view to concluding an ambitious agreement at the Paris Conference on climate change in December, our Agenda notes the need to assist vulnerable countries through initiatives to adapt to and mitigate climate change.

While we recognize the important progress that has been made, we would once again like to emphasize our consistent position on some issues that do not seem to be in line with universally recognized international law.

We would like to point out that there is a footnote in paragraph 54 of the Agenda that refers to the proposal of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, which contains, inter alia, reservations expressed by Member States, including those made by my delegation. I would recall that, through a note verbale dated 24 July 2014, my country stressed that it was not bound by the provisions of target 5.6, on certain review conferences. Underscoring that the responsibility in the education of children belongs to the parents, we noted that the reference in the target 3.7 to sexual and reproductive health-care services should not be interpreted as a systematic recourse to abortion. With respect to target 5.4, we noted that marriage leading to a family is a sacred union between a man and a woman as set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Reiterating the tenor of our note verbale, we would add that paragraph 19 of the Universal Declaration and target 10.2 of the Agenda 2030 do not, in our view, apply to the concepts of sexual orientation or lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) sexual identity. We will not accept under any circumstances that implementation of these or other paragraphs and targets or their interpretation or any related communication exercise that would give implicit or explicit recognition to notions of sexual orientation, LGBT or otherwise. In that connection, my country will implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in strict accordance with its domestic law and universally recognized human rights and in the spirit of full respect for the ethical, cultural and religious values and beliefs of our societies.

As for the rest of the Agenda, we will take the necessary steps to incorporate it into our national development strategy, while ensuring an appropriate implementation and follow-up.

I would be grateful, Sir, if you could enter the text of this statement in the record of the General Assembly under sub-item (a) of agenda item 13 and item 115.

Mr. Zagaynov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian delegation supports today's adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 69/315, on the draft post-2015 development agenda up to 2030. We trust that this document will be adopted by the leaders of Member States at the United Nations summit in September. We consider that the draft agenda provides a sufficiently full picture of the problem areas of sustainable development, which most States consider a priority and which they intend to resolutely tackle over the next 15 years.

We are pleased to note that the new draft agenda is a balanced mix of economic, social and ecological aspects of sustainable development. We deem it right to place ending poverty, including extreme poverty, as the number-one goal that needs to be met swiftly. The strength of the draft document we adopted today for transmission to the upcoming summit lies in its inclusion of ways of implementing each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and the agenda as a whole. Its harmonization of the basic principles and outlines of the follow-up mechanism and review is also very significant.

However, despite the document's complex nature, we are regrettably obliged to conclude that some important topics related to sustainable development are not reflected in it. In particular, the drug issue is considered only through the prism of drug addiction prevention and treatment. The new agenda's coverage does not extend to the continued issues we face relating to combating the illegal production and trafficking of drugs. Unless those are addressed, preventing drug addiction will be impossible. Nor does the document reflect the notion of alternative development as an effective measure for dealing with the global drug problem.

Another important aspect is improving our management of the Internet as one of the most promising ways we have of increasing access to knowledge, experience and advanced technology. In our opinion, the agenda errs in not paying attention to the General Assembly's high-level meeting to be held in December on the review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on Information Society.

We believe the new agenda should help to unite our efforts rather than divide them in combating our shared challenges. In that regard, we urge all participants to abide strictly by the principles of national leadership and freedom in policymaking and to refrain from imposing unsuitable development priorities and strategies on others. We would like to take this opportunity to clarify a number of important points in the new draft agenda.

First, we assume that in paragraph 4 of the declaration, which cites our desire to see the sustainable development goals and targets met for all nations, peoples and segments of society, "segments of society" refers to social groups and other communities of people united by any meaningful social feature, whatever it may be. We believe the new Sustainable Development Goals should contribute to a mutually respectful dialogue among all States, without adding to the differences that divide people or creating artificial new categories and groups among them.

Secondly, concerning paragraph 11, in reaffirming the outcomes of all the major United Nations conferences and summits, our delegation has in mind only those processes that the Russian Federation has been directly involved with and whose results it has expressed formal agreement with.

Thirdly, with regard to paragraph 19, I would like to note that we consider ourselves bound only by human-rights obligations based on international treaties and documents to which the Russian Federation is party. The aforementioned positions of the new agenda should not be interpreted as a change in the Russian Federation's legal and political position on those issues, and I ask that that be reflected in the record of today's meeting.

In supporting today's approval of the draft agenda, the Russian delegation has also supported a compromise that opens up opportunities for working together even in areas where our positions differ. After the draft agenda's adoption at this month's summit we will be ready to work on its implementation, in accordance with national priorities and within the framework of the relevant international obligations to which the Russian Federation is party.

Mr. Di Luca (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Argentina would like to associate itself with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. We would also like to make the following comments in our national capacity.

Argentina welcomes today's unanimous adoption of resolution 69/315 and the agreement to transmit the draft 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that our Heads of State and Government will adopt at the summit to be held later this month. We believe this is an important opportunity and one that is an essential ethical, political and social responsibility, for building a just, inclusive, equal and peaceful world. Our draft agenda for 2030 is the result of a long and inclusive intergovernmental negotiation process, with broad participation by civil society, academia, regional organizations and the United Nations system. It reflects the consensus we have been able to build by bringing together some very different positions in order to overcome the challenges we are facing with regard to sustainable development in all three of its dimensions.

The draft agenda will be universally applicable and is unquestionably very ambitious. We have set ourselves the goal of eradicating poverty and hunger in all their forms throughout the world, and the international community has set itself clear priorities, ways of implementing them and mechanisms for following up on the progress to be made. Once the draft 2030 agenda is adopted, it is our countries that will be responsible for implementing it and reaching its goals, with each country's varying levels of development being taken into account.

Argentina believes that comprehensive sustainable development can be possible only with a cooperative approach of solidarity that respects diversity and the individual paths to development that each country chooses for itself. We should work in close cooperation, not just between countries but also together with the United Nations system, regional and subregional organizations and those of civil society. We also believe in the importance of achieving genuine political commitment within the international community, particularly among developed countries, in order to ensure that we can create the means of implementation necessary to achieve our goals and create a world in which universal, unhampered human rights and dignity are truly respected. Bearing in mind the role that the United Nations development system will be called on to play, we will have to strengthen its institutions in order to ensure improvement in its alignment with the mandates and targets established by the Organization and in accordance with local development priorities.

Finally, I would like to stress that the agreement that has now been reached concludes a three-year process of intergovernmental negotiations, and to highlight the leadership shown in that process by Ambassadors Macharia Kamau and David Donoghue of Kenya and Ireland, respectively. Now we begin the difficult task of making this vision for our future a reality. We hope that this commitment can be translated into reality in order to ensure that the draft agenda is fully implemented in such a way that future generations can look back and celebrate our commitment.

Mrs. Özgür (Turkey): The year 2015 has been one of historic significance for sustainable development. In July, we succeeded in finalizing and adopting the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. At the beginning of August, we completed negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda and its draft outcome document (resolution 69/315, annex), the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In Paris in December, the international community is expected to adopt a legally binding agreement that will determine how we can collectively address the challenges of climate change beyond 2020. And today, we have taken another important step in establishing a framework for the global development agenda for the next 15 years. We would like to take this opportunity to once again express our appreciation to the co-facilitators of the post-2015 intergovernmental negotiations, the Permanent Representatives of Kenya and Ireland, for their leadership and efforts, as well as for the dedication and constructiveness they displayed during the negotiations.

In conclusion, I would like to note that the reference in the draft outcome document to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which Turkey is not party to, cannot be construed as a change in the established legal and political position of Turkey with regard to that instrument.

Mr. Pipa (United States of America): I want to begin by applauding all delegations for enabling us to take this step forward today. Achieving consensus on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 69/315, annex) in advance of the summit is a remarkable success, and one that all of us should be proud of. It is a testament to the purpose and the promise of multilateralism and to what is possible when we come together and push each other to go further. The Agenda offers all our countries a common vision for what we can and will work collectively to achieve over the next 15 years, and helps us focus our efforts on the most critical challenges and actions. We appreciate the goodwill, cooperative spirit, hard work and passion demonstrated by all Member States, as well as the stakeholders who stayed around the clock throughout our negotiations and gave us ideas and evidence to craft a better Agenda. Their commitment ensured that we kept our focus when it was needed most.

We must also thank the co-facilitators once more, Ambassadors Kamau and Donoghue, for their leadership and vision throughout the process. We also want to thank President Kutesa for his leadership as we head into the post-2015 summit, a critical moment not only to celebrate our achievements thus far but to spur action for the successful implementation of the Agenda.

The United States strongly supports the vision and ambition of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. We are committed to their implementation. The Agenda is global and aspirational and provides for taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities. That balanced approach does not diminish our collective resolve or will to reach its milestones; it strengthens our potential to achieve them.

We would like to take this opportunity to make important points of clarification on the text, with the understanding that none of the provisions of the Agenda, including those characterized as having been agreed, create or affect rights or obligations under international law, as recognized in paragraph 18.

The United States understands that the language regarding the "permanent sovereignty" of each State over "its wealth, natural resources and economic activity" must be read consistent with States' obligations under international human rights treaties to which they are a party, as well as other obligations of States under international law. Similarly, the Agenda does not affect potential constraints under international law or agreements that apply to policy space. Nor does the Agenda, including paragraph 30, affect the rights of States to take trade measures. Finally, target 6.5 must be read consistent with existing transboundary agreements.

We also highlight our mutual recognition, in paragraph 58, that the implementation of the Agenda must respect and be without prejudice to the independent mandates of other processes and institutions, including negotiations. It does not prejudge or serve as a precedent for decisions and actions under way in other forums. For example, the United States continues to view the World Trade Organization (WTO) as the appropriate forum for the negotiation of trade issues. The Agenda does not represent agreement on WTO Doha-round related issues, nor does it represent a commitment to provide new market access for goods or services. The Agenda also does not interpret or alter any WTO agreement or decision, including the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights. Similarly, indicators, governance proposals and language developed through the process have no precedential value for the international financial institutions, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group.

In supporting the draft document, we reaffirm our long-standing commitment both to international development and to the promotion of human rights. However, we must reiterate the concerns of the United States with regard to the topic of the right to development, which are long-standing and well known. It does not have an agreed international meeting, and any related discussion needs to focus on aspects of development related to human rights, which are universal rights held and enjoyed by all individuals and which every individual may demand from his or her own Government.

As we have said many times, the United States remains as committed as ever to assisting the most vulnerable on a path towards the achievement of the Agenda. At the same time, we collectively recognize that it is a universal Agenda that requires action by all. We underscore that, by its terms, paragraph 12 reaffirms the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities as it was originally set out in principle 7 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, where it was explicitly limited to certain types of global environmental degradation. The reaffirmation of principle 7 in that limited context does not imply, and the United States does not accept, that the principle has relevance or application to the broad range of issues addressed in the Agenda, or to sustainable development as a whole.

With respect to paragraph 28 and targets 8.4 and 12.1, the United States views "resource efficiency" to be at the core of "sustainable consumption and production". We interpret those provisions to speak to the need to enhance national policies aimed at fostering resource sufficiency and sustainability in a manner appropriate to each country's national circumstances. We further understand the provisions to reaffirm the universal approach to sustainable consumption and production that recognize some flexibility is needed in implementation. The provisions highlight the special leadership role of developed countries in promoting the exchange of best practices on sustainable consumption and production implementation, based on our experience with environmental protection policies and actions and our technical expertise and capability.

The United States firmly considers strong protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights as providing critical incentives needed to produce innovation that will enable us to address the health, environment and development challenges of today and tomorrow. In that respect, the United States understands that references to the transfer of, or access to, technology refer to voluntary technology transfer on mutually agreed terms and conditions and that all references to "access to information" or knowledge are to information or knowledge that is made available with the authorization of the legitimate holder.

I would now like to make some additional points on specific language or targets in our Agenda.

With respect to paragraph 44 and targets 10.6 and 16.8, the United States interprets the language to refer to the effectiveness of developing country representation and voice under current United Nations institutional models, not to governance or other changes within the international financial institutions, including the IMF and the World Bank Group.

We note that the term "equitable" is used in multiple contexts in the Agenda, including in Goal 4 and target 6.2. While the United States fully endorses the importance of universal access to safe drinking water, sanitation and education, for example, we must collectively avoid any unintended interpretations of the term "equitable" that implies a subjective assessment of fairness that, among other things, may lead to discriminatory practices. Concerning the reference to "equal rights to economic resources" in target 1.4, the United States understands that to mean that laws regarding ownership, inheritance and other property rights should be non-discriminatory and that those rights should be protected in a non-discriminatory manner.

We understand target 8.7 to refer to the unlawful "recruitment and use of child soldiers", which can also be a form of human trafficking.

With respect to target 15.3, the United States recognizes the concept of land degradation neutrality at the national and sub-national levels only and understands that efforts in furthering that target would be composed of efforts at the national level, which would not entail any international administration under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, or otherwise.

With regard to the references to access and benefits sharing in targets 2.5 and 15.6, the United States understands "as internationally agreed" to mean as agreed in international instruments for parties to those instruments. The implementation of those targets should take into consideration the important role of stakeholders and be conducted on mutually agreed terms. We do not read those targets to suggest any relationship between intellectual property protection and access and benefit-sharing policy.

Regarding the reference to "foreign occupation" in paragraph 35, we reaffirm our abiding commitment to a comprehensive and lasting peace based on a two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. We remain committed to supporting the Palestinian people in practical and effective ways, including through sustainable development. We will continue to work with the Palestinian Authority, Israel and international partners to improve the lives of ordinary people towards a more sustainable future.

In that spirit we, alongside so many in the Hall, look ahead with anticipation to the implementation of the Agenda. Adopting the Agenda at this early stage is a remarkable accomplishment, and one that we have used to motivate tangible and powerful actions to match our ambitions. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda, adopted at the third International Conference on Financing for Development, in July, is a strong starting point for our efforts. The Action Agenda provides us with an ambitious, comprehensive and modern framework for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which includes more than 100 concrete measures and takes us collectively further than we have gone before on the full range of the means of implementation topic. We note that the 2030 Agenda recognizes that the Action Agenda provides the context for both the interpretation and implementation of the means of implementation targets and underscores that the targets can be achieved through the implementation of the Action Agenda.

In the context of implementation, we particularly welcome the emphasis the 2030 Agenda places on a few central, cross-cutting themes and drivers of progress. While some may have Goals associated with them, we note them here for the power inherent in their underlying and cross-cutting quality.

With regard to inequality, we all know well the history. Despite stimulating remarkable progress, the Millennium Development Goals let large pockets of key populations, and even whole countries, slip through the cracks. This Agenda's emphasis on leaving no one behind and on ensuring progress for the most vulnerable is a notable and critical change. We are pleased to see it. We welcome its specific emphasis on the inclusion of all groups and all people, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people.

Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is integral to achieving success with this Agenda. To that end, the particular recognition of women's sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights and its importance to development is crucial.

Science, technology, innovation and data — each will be critical to accelerating progress in order to achieve the SDGs. New approaches and innovations will increase the impact and decrease the cost of interventions across this Agenda.

With regard to good governance and the rule of law, to achieve our ambitions, we will need institutions at all levels that are effective, transparent, accountable and democratic.

In terms of sustainability, the SDGs ensure focus on long-term development, locking in progress by integrating sustainability in all three dimensions: the environmental, social and economic. Well-crafted Goals and targets in areas such as climate-smart agriculture, renewable energy, healthy oceans, natural resource management and disaster risk reduction within these Goal areas will help protect against the reversal of development gains. Sustainable development relies on preventing and mitigating conflict and violent extremism; promoting open, resilient and democratic societies and local ownership; and advancing inclusive economic growth.

We look ahead now to the September summit for a great many opportunities to build these out further and to put on display their promise and our collective commitment to it. We also look forward to the process of developing practical and informative indicators for each of our Goals and targets. These will add clarity and precision to our efforts here.

We thank all members once again for their work until now. Onward!

Mr. Roet (Israel): Israel welcomes the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and believes that it ushers in a new era of sustainable development that is unprecedented both in scope and ambition. Israel reiterates its full commitment to the 2030 Agenda and stands ready to actively contribute to the successful implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

We would like to take this opportunity to express our deep gratitude to the President of the General Assembly and to co-facilitators Ambassador Donoghue and Ambassador Kamau, without forgetting Ambassador Kőrösi. We also would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Amina Mohammed and the Secretariat for their steadfast determination and support. We would also like to acknowledge the significant contribution and valuable inputs of all Member States and stakeholders, including civil society organizations, to the process.

The Agenda, if implemented in full, has the power to once and for all free the world from hunger, disease and poverty. This can be achieved only if we work together in the spirit of cooperation and partnership and if each of us makes an honest commitment to the future well-being of their own people.

Israel joined the consensus on the outcome document (resolution 69/315, annex) due to its unwavering commitment to sustainable development and the successful conclusion of the process. However, our position on the inclusion of politicized language in paragraph 35, as well as elsewhere, remains unchanged. Using the development agenda to score insignificant political points is counterproductive, pollutes the discussion and moves us further away from working towards the worthy development goals that we all aspire to. As we stated throughout the negotiations, the road to peace — the peace that we all desire — runs through Jerusalem and Ramallah and is not found in development resolutions. All outstanding issues between Israel and the Palestinians can be resolved only through direct negotiations.

Mr. Mnatsakanyan (Armenia): I would like to thank the President for convening this meeting and for providing an opportunity to further reflect on our ambitious collective journey that led the membership towards the formulation of the post-2015 development agenda. I extend my words of appreciation to all delegations that have been involved in this process and thank the co-facilitators and their teams for their outstanding leadership, passion and dedication. The environment of an inclusive and interactive negotiation maintained and cultivated throughout the process was a source of inspiration to all and allowed a large number of Member States and civil society to voice their interests and concerns and to engage in a constructive exchange.

As we highlighted previously, the power of the new development agenda lies in the consideration of the long-term sustainability impact of inclusive development whereby diversity should be viewed as a source of strength. Policies of exclusion and discrimination undermine the sustainability of economic and social development. Coherent steps should be taken to eradicate such practices in the post-2015 world. In that regard, we welcome the commitment to a revitalized global partnership that will help ensure the continuous improvement of an enabling environment through enhanced international cooperation, regional integration and connectivity.

We welcome the reference to the specific needs of landlocked developing countries in this Agenda, as well as the integration of the Vienna Programme of Action in the text. As a landlocked country facing structural constraints, it is only natural that we are fully committed to the idea of eliminating barriers to international trade and development, including those stemming from unilateral coercive measures, policies of blockade and unduly discriminating trade regimes and other forms of unilateral coercion.

Commitment to global solidarity is what lies at the heart of the exceptional power of multilateralism. The formulation of an ambitious plan of action was an important test of multilateralism up until the very end of the intergovernmental process. However, we regret that the last major amendment to the text — namely, paragraph 38, which was introduced without prior discussion — failed to fully and properly reflect the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. With due respect for the Charter, we must quote its Article 1, paragraph 2:

> "To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace".

We look forward to the successful implementation of the new international commitments, which we are sure will benefit millions of people and lead to a better and more sustainable future. We stand ready to contribute to this global endeavour to the best of our capacities.

Mrs. Ibrahimova (Azerbaijan): Our delegation would like to reflect upon the fundamental document (resolution 69/315, annex), the post-2015 development agenda, which will guide the entire world towards shaping a better tomorrow for future generations. In this vein, the delegation of Azerbaijan expresses its thanks to the co-facilitators of this complex process, Ambassador Macharia Kamau of Kenya and Ambassador David Donoghue of Ireland, for their leadership and outstanding input in steering the intergovernmental negotiations.

The post-2015 development agenda, which was the culmination of three years of intensive negotiations and great efforts, is a clear road map that highlights a number of prime and complex objectives, which we shall strive to reach collectively, just as this document was drafted collectively, in order to leave no one behind. As Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has highlighted, it is truly the people's agenda.

We should do all we can to transfer this agenda from paper to real-life action. We therefore think that the targets reflected in the document, especially those concerning regional integration, have to be pursued by concrete actions implemented by the international community, since the development of regions results in the greater success of the economic and social facets of our countries. In the meantime, regional integration cannot be achieved unless regional conflicts are resolved. It is crystal-clear that there can be no regional integration and cooperation if one Member State occupies the territory of another Member State.

Azerbaijan suffers from such regional conflict, and, despite General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, our neighbouring State Member of the United Nations continues its illegal occupation. In that regard, it is evident that the Republic of Azerbaijan will act based on its highest national interest.

Ms. Loe (Norway): Norway is pleased to join in welcoming the adoption of resolution 69/315, on the historic 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. I would like to join colleagues in thanking the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General for all the support that has been given to the process. I want to commend in particular the two facilitators, Ambassadors Kamau and Donoghue, for their outstanding leadership and stamina in guiding us through the process. I would also like to commend Ambassador Kőrösi of Hungary who, together with Ambassador Kamau, guided us skilfully through the work of the Open Working Group.

This has been a long journey and a unique one. Never before have so many different actors — Governments, international organizations, civil society, the private sector and others — come together to design such a truly global and transformative agenda. We would like to them all for their contributions and spirit of cooperation and for making this journey such an unprecedented learning experience.

The 2030 Agenda is not perfect, but it gives us the vision and the tools to eradicate poverty within the next 15 years, while safeguarding the planet, respecting all human rights and ensuring gender equality. This ambitious set of goals and targets is an expression of our common experience and determination.

Reaching this historic milestone is just the start. Norway is fully committed to this joint Agenda and is eager to start implementing it. The spirit of compromise that we saw during the negotiations is very encouraging as we start the follow-up process.

Ms. Franceschi (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): Panama aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. In our national capacity, we would like to make a few final timely comments.

We are very happy to see what is happening today. After an participatory intergovernmental process lasting several years, Member States now by consensus have agreed on a new development agenda for the next 15 years. We would like to express our thanks to Ambassadors Donaghue and Kamau for the excellent work of facilitation in this process. They were able to inspire confidence, reconcile difficult positions and bring enthusiasm and sense of humour to the process.

Panama welcomes the new agenda and the commitments. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a transformative and ambitious agenda for a world in turmoil that demands of us a paradigm shift that will only be possible if each of us individually understands the implications and makes profound transformations. This will involve changing the practices, habits and customs received from our families, societies and Governments. It means that we will have to take ethical decisions and not act out of self-interest; in other words, we cannot continue to do business as usual.

Today's adoption is a historic milestone, as several speakers have mentioned, and the culminaiton of a multilateral approach. The path forward will be a great challenge in which the capacities, genuine commitment and leadership of Member States at the national level will be put into play. We trust and we hope that the decisions we make today will truly manifest this change of mind in our individual leaders and above all in ourselves that must be our contribution to inspiring the transformations that future generations deserve.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position. We will now hear statements after the adoption of the resolution.

I give the floor to the Observer of the European Union.

Mr. Zampetti (European Union): On behalf of the European Union and its member States, I would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to Ambassadors Kamau and Donoghue and their teams for their tireless work and guidance as co-facilitators of the post-2015 process. It has been a long journey and, we can say today, a very successful one. Without their leadership and the constructive engagement by all Member States and stakeholders, and the crucial support of the Secretary-General and the Secretariat, we would not be where we are today. We would also like to recognize the key contribution of Ambassador Kőrösi, who was a Chair of the Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals and who helped us reach agreement on a crucial component of the 2030 Agenda. Finally, we would like to thank the President of the General Assembly and his team for supporting this process.

The European Union and its member States now look forward to the post-2015 summit, where the Heads of State and Government and high representatives will adopt the 2030 Agenda and the timely start of its implementation. We trust the success achieved in agreeing on the 2030 Agenda will generate additional momentum towards a very successful Paris meeting in December.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the Observer of the Holy See.

Monsignor Grech (Holy See): At the outset, my delegation expresses its gratitude to Ambassadors Macharia Kamau and David Donoghue for their leadership and commitment in guiding the intergovernmental process that led to the agreement on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Their tireless efforts and perseverance provided for an inclusive and transparent process that produced the universal Agenda we have before us today. This Agenda is a clear sign that, in spite of differences in some areas, the international community has come together and affirmed its commitment to eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions and to ensuring that all children, women and men throughout the world will have the conditions necessary to live in both freedom and dignity.

The Agenda rightly puts the centrality of the human person as the subject primarily responsible for development. The Holy See remains confident that the related pledge that no one will be left behind will serve as the perspective through which the entire Agenda will be read to protect the right to life of the person, from conception until natural death.

My delegation believes that a renewed global partnership will be crucial to the Agenda's success. Also, by valuing the enormous potential of youth, by empowering women and girls, and by recognizing the role of the family in integral development, we will ensure the centrality of the human person as the primary subject responsible for development, while holding Governments accountable.

As Pope Francis reminds us in his encyclical letter of 24 May, *Laudato Si'*,

> "environmental problems cannot be separated from the analysis of human, family, work-related and urban contexts, nor from how individuals relate to themselves, which leads in turn to how they relate to others and to the environment."

A more integrated approach to development will make us see better that

> "[w]e are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather one complex crisis that is both social and environmental."

Therefore,

> "[s]trategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature."

The Holy See agrees that the draft agenda is an ambitious plan of action, with many proper and laudable aspirations that can be described as a great cultural, spiritual and educational challenge. We take the position that for any development plan to succeed, its underlying efforts must be directed towards an integral ecology open to categories that transcend the language of mathematics and biology and take us to the heart of what is human. We must cultivate a greater awareness of a human ecology, including appreciation of our common origin and mutual belonging, and of a future to be shared with everyone. While agreeing with most of the goals and targets enumerated in the draft agenda, the Holy See, in conformity with its nature and particular mission, wishes to express the following reservations on some of the concepts it uses.

The Holy See considers that the terms "sexual and reproductive health" and "reproductive rights" apply to a holistic concept of health, each in its own way embracing a person in the entirety of his or her personality, mind and body and fostering the achievement of personal maturity in sexuality and in the mutual love and decision-making that characterize the conjugal relationship between a man and a woman in accordance with moral norms. The Holy See does not consider abortion or access to abortion or abortifacients as an aspect of those terms.

With reference to the terms "contraception", "family planning", "sexual and reproductive health", "sexual and reproductive rights", "reproductive rights" and any other terms regarding family-planning services and regulation of fertility concepts in the document, the Holy See reaffirms its well-known position concerning the family-planning methods that the Catholic Church considers morally acceptable as against those family-planning services that do not respect spouses' liberty or the human dignity and human rights of those concerned.

With reference to gender, the Holy See understands that term to be grounded in a biological sexual identity that is either male or female. With regard to paragraphs 2 and 3 of this statement of position, the Holy See also reaffirms its reservations about the outcome documents of the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women.

With respect to education or information on sexuality, the Holy See stresses the primary responsibility and prior rights of parents, including their right to religious freedom, when it comes to the education and upbringing of their children, as enshrined in, among other things, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In that sense, the Holy See wishes to underline the centrality of the family, the natural and fundamental group unit of society, as well as the role and rights and duties of parents in educating their children. The Holy See places its reservations on paragraph 27 of the Declaration and targets 3.7 and 5.6.

The Holy See emphasizes that the draft agenda should be read in line with the properly interpreted purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including full respect for international law, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights treaties. With regard to the non-binding instruments that are also mentioned, the Holy See emphasizes the important distinction that must be maintained between treaties that have been formally negotiated and adopted by States with the intention of creating legal obligations and other international documents that do not have the same authority. The Holy See does not endorse principles in any international or regional non-binding instruments that differ from those set out here and articulated in its teachings.

My delegation requests that this statement be included in the official record of today's meeting.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker on this item.

On behalf of the President, I should like to express my sincere thanks to Ambassador David Donoghue of Ireland and Ambassador Macharia Kamau of Kenya, who demonstrated great political acumen in their conduct of the complex discussions in the intergovernmental negotiations. I also thank all Member States for their valuable contributions to reaching an agreement on today's resolution 69/315.

The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 13 and of agenda item 115.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.

United Nations A/69/PV.102

General Assembly
Sixty-ninth session

Official Records

102nd plenary meeting
Thursday, 10 September 2015, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kutesa .... (Uganda)

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Agenda item 32 (*continued*)

Prevention of armed conflict

Draft resolution (A/69/L.74/Rev.1)

The President: Members will recall that, under agenda item 32, the General Assembly adopted resolution 69/285, at its 92nd plenary meeting, on 3 June 2015, and adopted resolution 69/293, at its 96th plenary meeting, on 19 June 2015.

I now give the floor to the representative of Nigeria to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.74/Rev.1.

Mr. Elias-Fatile (Nigeria): As the facilitator of the negotiations process on draft resolution A/69/L.74/Rev.1, entitled "Commemoration of the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations", Nigeria has the pleasure to introduce, on behalf of the Group of African States, the draft text in this meeting. I would like to begin by underlining the obvious fact that this is the only Member-State-driven initiative to commemorate the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, and to request the Assembly's support for the draft resolution's adoption. It will be to the credit of all Member States that we all agree to commemorate the seventieth anniversary of the Organization, which belongs to everyone, through a Member States-driven initiative, as represented by this draft resolution.

This is a very important text, and sufficient time was spent negotiating it before we were able to have what is before us this afternoon. Kindly permit me to provide, in two minutes, some background information for the benefit of some members that could not participate in the informal consultations where we negotiated the text.

As of April, it was obvious to the African Group that there was no plan in place by the General Assembly to commemorate the seventieth anniversary of the signing of the Charter that established the United Nations. Consequently, the African States reflected on this and engaged in consultations, conscious of the need to seize the opportunity of the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations to take stock of the achievements and challenges of the Organization after 70 years of its existence. Against that backdrop, African Permanent Representatives mandated their experts to explore the possibility of developing a draft text with a feasible proposal that would be acceptable to all on the need to celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the Organization.

Prior to the commencement of efforts, discussions, and eventually negotiations, among African Group experts on the draft resolution, we conducted some research to see if there were any ongoing discussions on the same subject at the United Nations. That became necessary to avoid the duplication of effort and for other germane reasons. Following our inquiry, we were satisfied that there were no similar ongoing initiatives at the United Nations.

Eventually, we arrived at a text that was presented to Member States for their consideration at our first informal meeting on Thursday, 10 June. The draft text

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before the Assembly for consideration this afternoon is a product of compromise, deep reflection and far-reaching consultations. It takes on board a number of considerations, including, first, a realization of the importance of marking the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations in a significant way.

Secondly, as we mark the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, it was considered very important to reflect on and take account of the issue of the maintenance of international peace and security — the very reason for the establishment of the Organization, in 1945. That is an important issue to Africa.

Thirdly, the seventieth anniversary is an ideal milestone by which to reflect on what has been achieved, especially in the area of the maintenance of international peace and security, which is a fundamental concern to us in Africa.

Fourthly, it should be recalled that the series of United Nations meetings already scheduled for the high-level segment of the seventieth session of the General Assembly will focus on the issue of development, while none of the meetings will focus on the subject of international peace and security.

Fifthly, this also buttresses the need for the theme of the thematic debate to focus on the subject of the maintenance of international peace and security by creating a platform to discuss it extensively at the highest level possible during the high-level segment of the seventieth session of the General Assembly.

Lastly, from the beginning of the discussions on the draft resolution, the African Group continually highlighted the need to avoid a draft resolution that would involve any financial implications. It is delightful to note that the draft before us will have no financial implications, as we were informed and as will be announced again this afternoon.

We are grateful to Member States for the large turnout at the informal meetings in June and July, and we appreciate the overwhelming support that we received from delegations. It is remarkable that there were about 80 delegations at the very first informal consultations. The initial discussions went very smoothly, with many delegations supporting Africa and commending this initiative. The African Group appreciates the observations, the suggestions, the different views that were advanced and, indeed, the invaluable contributions made during the informal consultations.

It is equally instructive to add that the programme budget implications associated with the draft resolution were a major area of concern, on which there were strong reservations by four delegations. It will be recalled that the preambular and all operative paragraphs, including the paragraph that contains information with indications that the draft resolution would involve some financial implications in the beginning, were agreed as a result of this. However, today, as I said, it is noteworthy and encouraging to know that this concern is no longer relevant, as the Secretariat has clearly confirmed that a budget officer has indicated that the draft resolution will not involve any financial implications.

In conclusion, on behalf of the African States, I wish to state again that this is the only Member States-driven initiative to commemorate the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations after a series of negotiations, consultations and discussions, including the compromise that went into it. We request delegations' cooperation and support to adopt the draft text this afternoon for implementation. We encourage delegations to participate at the highest possible level in the thematic debate.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.74/Rev.1, entitled "Commemoration of the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations".

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Zhang Saijin (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have also become sponsors of draft resolution A/69/L.74/Rev.1: Belarus, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Italy, Jordan, Norway, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Sweden.

The President: May I take it that the General Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/69/L.74/Rev.1?

Draft resolution A/69/L.74/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 69/316).

The President: Before giving the floor to the speaker in explanation of position, may I remind delegations that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

I now give the floor to the representative of India.

Mr. Mukerji (India): I would like to begin by commending my colleagues from the African Union for this extremely timely initiative and for moving resolution 69/316 for the consideration of the General Assembly. As a sponsor of this resolution, my delegation fully supports the need to commemorate the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations through this proposed meeting of the General Assembly at the highest possible levels during the week of the high-level segment of the General Assembly.

It was on 16 April 2013 that my delegation first proposed that we commemorate the importance of the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations. I am therefore very happy that, with our brothers and sisters in Africa, we have today given concrete shape to this idea whose time has come.

The debate of 1 and 2 October will provide a useful platform to look at the strengths and weaknesses of the United Nations system in addressing issues of peace and security and to consider pathways to meaningfully address its structural anomalies, including through the reform and expansion of the Security Council, the primary organ mandated by the Charter of the United Nations with responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. My delegation therefore looks forward avidly to participating in those deliberations.

I would like to conclude by complimenting the facilitator, the delegation of Nigeria, on its excellent stewardship of this process and for having followed a truly consultative, open and transparent approach in the negotiations leading up to the adoption of the resolution.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 32?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 123 (*continued*)

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations

(t) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation

Draft resolution (A/69/L.79)

The President: The General Assembly will now take action on the draft resolution contained in document A/69/L.79.

Members will recall that the Assembly held its debate on agenda item 123 and its sub-items (a) to (y) at its 48th plenary meeting, on 11 November 2014.

I now give the floor to the representative of Kuwait to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.79.

Mr. Alotaibi (Kuwait): In my capacity as Chair of the group of members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in New York, I am pleased to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.79, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation".

The aforementioned draft resolution is consistent with the spirit, mission and purposes of resolution 3369 (XXX), of 10 October 1975, whereby the Assembly decided to invite the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to participate in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly and of its subsidiary organs in the capacity of observer.

In its preambular paragraphs, the draft resolution reaffirms the shared common goals of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the United Nations in conflict prevention, confidence-building, peacekeeping, conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation, mediation and preventive diplomacy, including conflict situations involving Muslim communities.

Furthermore, the draft resolution highlights the desire of the two organizations to work more closely in the political, economic, social, humanitarian, cultural and scientific fields and in their common search for solutions to global problems, such as questions relating to international peace and security, disarmament, self-determination, the promotion of a culture of peace through dialogue and cooperation, decolonization, fundamental human rights, economic and social development, and combating international terrorism. It welcomes the initiatives for interfaith dialogue by the two organizations and the existing cooperation between the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

In its operative paragraphs, the draft resolution welcomes the strong commitment of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in the fight against violent extremism and terrorism; the shared common goals of the two organizations in promoting and facilitating the Middle East peace process; and the cooperation between the two organizations towards combating intolerance and the stigmatization of persons based on their religion or belief.

Four decades after the rightful and wise decision of the General Assembly, today we are witnessing the increasing importance and utility of dynamic cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. Clearly, in the face of enduring as well as emerging conflicts, such cooperation between the two organizations has a strategic value.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude for the diligent work undertaken by delegations in drafting this draft resolution.

I now request all States members of the General Assembly to adopt the draft resolution contained in document A/69/L.79 by consensus.

The President: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their positions before the voting. May I remind delegations that explanations of position are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Bishnoi (India): Draft resolution A/69/L.79, on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), which has been introduced, is a significant departure from previous resolutions on the subject, especially the one adopted by the General Assembly in August 2013, at its sixty-seventh session.

While previous resolutions envisaged the OIC as contributing to promoting and facilitating the Middle East peace process to achieve the objective of establishing a just and comprehensive peace in that region, operative paragraph 4 of the present draft resolution seeks to go beyond.

According to the draft resolution introduced today, the OIC would foster solutions to "other conflicts". The rationale for seeking to extend the role of the OIC in this manner is not clear. The OIC is also not a regional organization as understood in the context of Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter. We had constructively participated in the consultations on this text and conveyed our views in clear terms. However, these consultations were terminated abruptly, without resolving these issues and without coming to a common, mutually acceptable understanding.

While we do not ask for a vote, we would like to reiterate our position that the OIC has no locus standi for facilitating resolutions to any dispute outside the Middle East peace process or disputes that affect States that are non-members of the OIC.

Mr. Mnatsakanyan (Armenia): Armenia proudly shares a long history of friendship, cooperation, deep mutual respect and civilizational interaction with the overwhelming majority of States members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). With some of them, our common history stretches back many centuries. Armenia enjoys and will spare no effort to further deepen the most cordial bilateral relations with those States.

Furthermore, Armenia enjoys effective cooperation within the regional organizations of which it is a member and recognizes the value of regional arrangements in promoting peace, development and human rights. Within one such regional organization, namely, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Armenia is faithfully working towards the "pacific settlement of local disputes", as stipulated in Chapter VIII of the Charter.

Armenia has traditionally been involved in a most constructive manner in the negotiation and adoption of resolutions under the agenda item under consideration.

With respect to the present draft resolution, it should be understood that in negotiating draft resolutions on cooperation with the United Nations, the relevant organization deals with the broader membership of the United Nations, not all of which are members of the given organization and therefore are not bound by its mandate.

Achieving an explicit consensus while negotiating such resolutions is therefore most important, not least for the sake of the credibility of such resolutions.

Regrettably, this is not the case with the present draft. The OIC has no mandate to foster the resolution of disputes outside its mandated area. Operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution in its present form therefore distorts basic principles of international law.

Armenia entered into the negotiations on the present draft in good faith and in a cooperative spirit. Armenia spared no effort in working to achieve a genuine consensus. In the course of negotiations, Armenia welcomed the position of the Chair to seek a consensus on each and every paragraph of the draft resolution or otherwise return to previous language. Notably, it was possible to secure consensus on most parts of the draft. At all stages of negotiations, Armenia tirelessly continued to seek a consensus on the language contained in operative paragraph 4. However, the negotiations have been frozen, no further consultations have been initiated and no efforts have been made to bridge the gaps. Such methods of negotiation have deprived this draft of genuine and full support. This is regrettable, as we were strongly committed to achieving consensual solutions, which, in our view, were perfectly possible.

While not asking for a vote, Armenia reiterates its position concerning paragraph 4, as the OIC has no mandate to foster the resolution of disputes outside its mandated area. Armenia calls upon the OIC to reiterate its support for internationally agreed formats of negotiations for the peaceful settlement of conflicts.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position before adoption.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.79, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation".

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Zhang Saijin (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of draft resolution A/69/L.79, in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors: Georgia, Italy and Sweden.

The President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/69/L.79?

Draft resolution A/69/L.79 was adopted (resolution 69/317).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (t) of agenda item 123?

It was so decided.

(u) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum

Draft resolution (A/69/L.90)

The President: The General Assembly will now take action on the draft resolution contained in document A/69/L.90.

Members will recall that the Assembly held its debate on agenda item 123 and its sub-items (a) to (y) at its 48th plenary meeting, on 11 November 2014.

I now give the floor to the representative of Papua New Guinea to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.90.

Mr. Sarufa (Papua New Guinea): Two days ago, Papua New Guinea assumed the Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum and, as my first assignment here in this context, I have the honour to introduce, on behalf of the members of the Pacific Islands Forum, draft resolution A/69/L.90, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum". We are deeply pleased and grateful to all sponsors of this draft resolution. We also welcome and note with appreciation the increasing number of sponsors for this biennial draft resolution that we have observed since 2011, which stands as a testament to the increasing recognition of the expanding cooperative relations between the Pacific Islands Forum and the United Nations.

I would be remiss if I were not to acknowledge and commend the pivotal and strong leadership role and valued contribution made by the outgoing Pacific Islands Forum Chair, the Republic of Palau, in guiding the work of the Forum over the past year. I would also like to place on record our particular appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Caleb Otto, Permanent Representative of Palau to the United Nations, for not only spearheading the draft resolution that is now before the General Assembly, but also for his stewardship of the work of the Pacific Islands Forum by fostering constructive and cooperative relations between the Pacific Islands Forum and the United Nations.

As the incumbent Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum, Papua New Guinea pledges to strive to further consolidate the expanding and mutually beneficial ties between the Forum and the United Nations as we embark on implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the other internationally agreed outcomes. In that regard, we welcome and look forward to the meeting between the Pacific Islands Forum leaders and the Secretary-General on the margins of the seventieth general debate of the General Assembly. I also applaud and thank the other members of the Forum and other States Members of the United Nations that played a role in the finalization of the draft resolution now under consideration.

As a brief overview, particularly for the States Members of the United Nations that are not familiar with the Pacific Islands Forum, the Forum was founded 44 years ago, in August 1971, as a regional intergovernmental organization where leaders would meet annually to develop collective responses to regional and international issues. It currently includes 16 independent and self-governing States in the Pacific region. It has three associate members, 12 observers and 17 post-Forum dialogue partners. The Pacific Islands Forum currently has observer status at the United Nations.

The Pacific Islands Forum's vision is one of ensuring a region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion and prosperity, so that all peoples of the Pacific can lead free, healthy and productive lives. The profile and influence of the Forum has also developed significantly and matured; once a relatively informal meeting of leaders, it is now a major summit that attracts the attention and participation of many other nations and international and regional organizations, including the United Nations. Coincidentally, the forty-sixth Pacific Islands Forum is currently under way in Port Moresby, and concludes tomorrow.

The Forum's administrative arm is the Pacific Islands Forum secretariat, based in Suva. It acts as the secretariat for Forum-related events, implements decisions by leaders, facilitates the delivery of development assistance to member States and undertakes the political and legal mandates of Forum meetings.

Turning to the draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum, A/69/L.90 is a biennial resolution. In essence, the draft resolution is a procedural and technical update, which refers to key recent developments in the relations between the Pacific Islands Forum and the United Nations over the past two years. It takes into account the recent major intergovernmental processes and internationally agreed outcomes and their relevance to the work of the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum, respectively, as well as the importance of enhancing cooperation between the two entities in these and other relevant areas, including the outcome of the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, the Samoa Pathway, which addresses sustainable development issues concerning small island developing States (SIDS), of which many are Pacific Islands Forum countries, the third United Nations Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the third International Conference on Financing for Development, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which will be considered for adoption by world leaders during the post-2015 summit to be held in two weeks' time.

Another new element that has been included in the draft resolution is the recognition of the importance of the work being undertaken by the Joint Inspection Unit on the comprehensive review of the United Nations system support for small island developing States, particularly in the context of the SIDS sustainable development challenges, and the relevance of ensuring effective United Nations system support for SIDS sustainable development efforts.

The draft resolution also takes into account the new development architecture of the Pacific Islands Forum, known as the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, adopted by the Forum leaders in July 2014. In brief, following a comprehensive review of the operations of the Pacific Islands Forum, the Forum leaders decided to recast the Forum's principal objectives, which are now incorporated in the Framework for Pacific Regionalism. The key objectives have been sustainable development that combines economic, social, and cultural development in ways that improve livelihoods, well-being and the sustainable use of the environment; economic growth that is inclusive and equitable; strengthened governance, accountable institutions and systems; and peace and security for all.

Finally, the draft resolution reaffirms the importance of ensuring that the sub-item on cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum remains on the General Assembly's agenda in future years.

My delegation is of the firm view that the draft resolution is essentially a technical and procedural update on strengthening constructive cooperative relations between the Pacific Islands Forum and the United Nations. It is balanced, fair, forward-looking and representative of the main developments evolving at both the regional Pacific and the international levels.

In conclusion, therefore, on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum members and the other sponsors of the draft resolution, Papua New Guinea urges the General Assembly to adopt it by consensus.

The President: Before giving the floor to the speaker in explanation of position, may I remind delegations that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Beck (Solomon Islands): The Solomon Islands wishes to clarify that, while it is a member of the Pacific Islands Forum, it is regretfully unable to sponsor today's draft biennial draft resolution, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum" (A/69/L.90), in its present form.

The draft resolution comes before us during a critical year in which we adopted the Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, concluded discussion on the 2030 agenda and adopted the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. All those frameworks call for a new form of relationship, a new political partnership and a paradigm shift in international cooperation between the United Nations and all regional organizations.

My delegation views today's draft resolution as important, since both the Pacific Islands Forum and the United Nations are centred on people and have a responsibility for the well-being of their peoples. That relationship is well defined in Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. In the view of the Solomon Islands, the relationship outlined in the draft resolution before us is not progressive enough. The agreed-on language from our sister regional organization for small island developing States (SIDS) and the United Nations, which was adopted during the current session and called for action by the United Nations and its specialized agencies, funds and programmes in order to intensify assistance to SIDS, was not accepted by the partners in this draft resolution. That is regrettable.

In my view, this is also a missed opportunity for developing an action-oriented partnership. My delegation finds it disturbing that, despite all the commitments that were announced during the post-2015 process, we are getting pushback even before our leaders have adopted the 2030 agenda. That raises the question of how serious we are about implementing our post-2015 agenda. Given the impact of climate change and our sustainable development challenges, time is a luxury we do not have. I am mindful that this draft resolution is a biennial one. The next opportunity to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum will be in 2017, in two years' time.

This reminds me of what the Secretary-General's predecessor, Kofi Annan, stated on more than one occasion while working on the outcome to the 2005 World Summit, which outlines contours for reforming the United Nations in order to make it more responsive to twenty-first-century conditions. He said that the United Nations was like a fire truck; it is putting out fires when it should be taking a more proactive role in preventing those fires from starting. What saddens my delegation is that something that was said 10 years ago is still a reality today in the Pacific. The United Nations system comes together annually to respond to disasters hitting the Pacific, but shies away multilaterally from building resilient societies and investing in our peoples. That is what our post-2015 agenda is all about. We see that gap in the draft resolution, and that is why we do not accept the proposed language.

The Solomon Islands values its relations with all the neighbouring countries that make up the Pacific Islands Forum and all those that have sponsored this draft resolution. We will not stand in its way. That said, if in future these draft resolutions do not allow for internal consultations among members of the regional organization concerned in order to define its relations with the United Nations and for time to engage with the wider membership on such resolutions, the Solomon Islands will call for a vote. Business as usual — or even incremental change — is no longer enough.

The President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.90, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum".

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Zhang Saijin (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of draft resolution A/69/L.90, in addition to those listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors: Albania, Angola, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Cuba, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Jamaica, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Maldives, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Norway, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Senegal, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/69/L.90?

Draft resolution A/69/L.90 was adopted (resolution 69/318).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (u) of agenda item 123?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 13 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

(a) Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Draft resolution (A/69/L.84)

The President: Members will recall that the General Assembly held a debate on agenda item 13 and its sub-item (a), jointly with agenda item 115, and adopted resolution 69/15 at its 51st plenary meeting, on 14 November 2014. Members will also recall that, under sub-item (a) of agenda item 13, the Assembly adopted resolution 69/282 at its 92nd plenary meeting, on 3 June 2015, and resolution 69/310 at its 98th plenary meeting, on 6 July 2015.

I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.84.

Mr. Mamabolo (South Africa): On behalf of members of the Group of 77 and China, I am honoured to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.84, entitled "Basic Principles on Sovereign Debt Restructuring Processes", under sub-item (a) of agenda item 13. The Group of 77 and China would like to congratulate the Ad Hoc Committee on Sovereign Debt Restructuring Processes for conducting and submitting its work. We would also like to thank Ambassador Sacha Llorentty Solíz of the Plurinational State of Bolivia for his leadership and stewardship as Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee. The Group also thanks the office of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development for its valuable support, which assists developing countries, where necessary, on issues such as debt restructuring.

The Group believes that the basic principles on sovereign debt restructuring processes in the draft resolution before us today are an important outcome and a good basis for future discussions on such issues. Those principles have been crafted in a way to ensure their inclusivity, non-intrusiveness and voluntary character. They should not favour one side over another. Both the rights of creditors and debtors are intended to be incorporated in the draft text in order to bring about a win-win situation for all concerned.

As several General Assembly resolutions have recognized, the issue of debt and its sustainability is essential for underpinning growth. In that regard, both debt sustainability and effective debt management, as well as the determination of adequate debt pre-payment capacity that does not impair sustainable development, are both factors to be considered in the efforts carried out by Member States to attain national and internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals, in the context of future commitments of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As States Members of the United Nations, we need to work together on sovereign debt restructuring and management process as we march with great vigour towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Indeed, the Agenda must leave no one behind. Sovereign debt matters concern both developed and developing countries. This should not be depicted as solely an issue for developing countries, but as a matter with the potential to upset the entire global economy.

The opportunity to have frank and an all-encompassing multilateral discourse on this issue, with all concerned on board, including the established international and regional financial institutions, should not be lost.

The Group also believes in the need for continuing efforts to address systematic fragilities and imbalances, and to reform and strengthen the international financial system, while reaffirming that multilateral institutions, including entities within the United Nations system and other relevant organizations, play an important role, in accordance with their respective mandates, in assisting countries in achieving and maintaining debt sustainability.

Ms. Rambally (Saint Lucia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

We therefore urge support for the draft resolution, as it mainly contains preliminary work on sovereign restructuring processes. We will need all hands on deck in order to address this issue once and for all.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.84, entitled "Basic Principles on Sovereign Debt Restructuring Processes".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Canada, Germany, Israel, Japan, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Gabon, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Draft resolution A/69/L.84 was adopted by 136 votes to 6, with 41 abstentions (resolution 69/319).

[Subsequently, the delegation of Spain informed the Secretariat that it had intended to abstain.]

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to the speakers in explanation of vote, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Ms. Lucas (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the States members of the European Union.

As we underscored on previous occasions, there should be no doubt that we recognize the major importance of sovereign debt restructuring, which has a significant impact on the global economy and on many countries in particular. Within the European

Union, we have also been seriously affected, whether on the creditor or on the debtor side.

We recall our reservations on the ways in which the original resolution 68/304, of 9 September 2014, and the subsequent resolution 69/247, of 29 December 2014, on modalities, were introduced and adopted. They made it impossible for us to participate in the process that led to today's resolution 69/319.

We take note of today's resolution, entitled "Basic Principles on Sovereign Debt Restructuring Processes", which includes various statements that do not accurately reflect international law or practices. While not being in a position to support it, in the light of the importance we all accord to the issue of sovereign debt restructuring, we will continue to take an active part in efforts aimed at tackling the challenges and identifying solutions in a constructive way.

We continue to believe that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is the appropriate institution to host global discussions on this subject and that the work on sovereign debt restructuring should remain in the IMF. We support the ongoing IMF efforts aimed at facilitating timely and orderly sovereign debt restructuring, where such a process is deemed necessary, based on a robust contractual approach, as well as the discussions in the Paris Club and in the Paris Forum on debt restructuring.

Furthermore, most recently with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, we collectively recognized the scope for improvements on this matter. The European Union will remain actively engaged in the related discussions.

Mr. Kononuchenko (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The acute debt crises of recent years have clearly illustrated the serious deficiencies in the existing system whereby sovereign debts are regulated. At a time of globalization, the consequences of conflicts between debtors and their creditors go beyond the sphere of bilateral relations and present increasing threat to regional and international financial stability. With the aim of preventing similar situations in future and strengthening consistency in the external loan market, the Russian Federation has always supported initiatives to improve the current system by which sovereign debt operations are restructured through the United Nations, as the most representative and inclusive global Organization.

Our delegation voted in favour of resolution 68/304. We actively supported the creation of the Ad Hoc Committee to establish a multilateral legal framework for sovereign debt restructuring processes. We believe that the principles elaborated by the Ad Committee and ratified today constitute an initial stage in the establishment of a sovereign debt restructuring process that is fair, predictable, balanced and effective. In our view, for the medium and long term, improving the implementation of sovereign debt restructuring operations is fundamental — in the interests of both creditors and debtors and through the development of a universal legal mechanism, which can apply to all types of external debt, and not solely to that of bond securities. We therefore believe that it would be wise to pursue the work already started, and we call on all countries of the Group of 20 — as well as international financial institutions — to take part in it.

Ms. Derderian (United States of America): As we have noted previously, the United States of America remains committed to the stability of the international financial system and to the development of its partners around the world. We respect the views of other Member States on this complex issue and acknowledge that the current sovereign debt restructuring system would benefit from further refinement, including more widespread adoption of updated collective action and pari passu clauses, as well as greater emphasis on public debt management.

Nonetheless, the proposed basic principles on sovereign debt restructuring processes are problematic in several respects, including language that could be construed as acknowledging a certain right to restructure sovereign debt that does not exist. The principles could also undermine the enforcement of contractual terms. Those and other concerns highlight the United States view that the United Nations is not best placed to address the issue of sovereign debt restructuring. As a separate issue, we note that it is unhelpful to make a distinction between Member and observer States, as the resolution does, whereas simply referring to States is a simpler, inclusive and preferable solution.

We will refrain from speaking to the issues in this text in more detail today, in consideration of our colleagues' time and in the light of the fact that our concerns are well known. Instead, we respectfully refer members to our prior statements on this process, including that of 9 September 2014 (see A/68/PV.107).

Our position has not changed, which is why we asked for a recorded vote on resolution 69/319 and voted against it.

Mr. Gunnarsson (Iceland): As we said at the beginning of this process in 2014, resolution 69/319 addresses a very real problem. We referred at the time to the Secretary-General's conclusion, in his report (A/69/167) on the matter, that international ad hoc arrangements for debt crisis resolution have resulted in incoherence and unpredictability. The problems and concerns about debt sustainability, which is one facet of sovereign debt restructuring, figure prominently in the Addis Ababa outcome document. In abstaining in the initial voting, we raised the question of what would be the right and proper international forum for that important cause. We also underlined that further work was needed in order to achieve a stronger consensus. It is our view that negotiations over the past two months have produced a balanced set of basic principles that should be used by the competent international organizations in the process of sovereign debt restructuring.

Given the balanced nature of the principles established, Iceland voted in favour of resolution 69/319.

Mr. Neelam (Australia): At the outset, let me say that Australia places great importance on improving sovereign debt restructuring processes. We recognize that that is an issue that is critical to affected economies around the world. For that reason, Australia has played and will continue to play a constructive role — through global forums — to find contractual solutions that improve the effectiveness of sovereign debt restructuring.

With regard to resolution 69/319, Australia does not support principle 1, which could be construed to imply that countries have a unilateral right to restructure their debt. We believe that any restructuring of debt should be the result of negotiation and mutual agreement between debtors and creditors. That is the reason that Australia abstained in the voting on this resolution today. Australia remains committed to engaging actively in the work of the International Monetary Fund, the Group of 20 and the Paris Club in order to effectively address this important issue.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote.

I shall now give the floor to those representatives who have requested the floor to make statements following the adoption of the resolution.

Mr. Timerman (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner and the people of Argentina, I would like very much to thank the great majority of United Nations Members that have understood the importance of resolution 69/319, which favours economic stability, peace in our societies and development. Today, debt is the cause of violence and inequality, creating a situation in which the powerful take advantage of less developed countries needing funds.

Why have we come here? Many countries have told us that this is not the right forum. However, it is the only forum that over the past 70 years of the history of the United Nations has adopted resolutions that have changed the course of the history of humankind. That has been achieved because this is a democratic forum where all sovereign countries have a voice and a vote. The Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, endorsed the decolonization and the self-determination of peoples and territorial integrity, adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and endorsed the peaceful settlement of disputes among States. It adopted the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, a Convention that was sponsored by the Republics of Argentina and France and based on the sad experience of the Argentine Republic with the forced disappearance of political activists during the last dictatorship.

If the Assembly is able to settle all those issues, which have unleashed major tragedies in the world, allowing the majority of us to understand the seriousness of those scourges and to resolve them, how is it not possible to say that this is not the right forum for addressing the issue of sovereign debt? Countries have a right to restructure sovereign debt. We have to put a limit on the pirates of the twenty-first century, which are nothing more than the vulture funds that have fed on the lack of global legislation and taken advantage of the poverty of many of the countries present in this Hall.

I am very proud of the fact that during this year, when we have worked so intensely, 12 additional countries have supported and voted in favour of the resolution and five have changed their negative votes, because this is not a question of winning. This is a democratic place. We did not come here to win anything; we came to convince people. That is why I thank the Assembly, which has moved this process forward very patiently and with a great deal of honour and much common sense, which has allowed us to reach this important juncture.

Finally, I would like to underscore the presence of our colleague, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, who has been kind enough to attend this meeting today. This is such an important day for all the countries of the Third World — Africa, Asia and Latin America — that are suffering and want to stop suffering the consequences of all the attacks against us by countries and vulture funds that do not wish to see us resolve our debt problem or to develop in peace and with political stability.

I would like to cede the floor to my colleague, Minister of Economy and Public Finances of Argentina Axel Kicillof, who is present with us today.

Mr. Kicillof (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank, together with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Assembly for its adoption of resolution 69/319, which has been an important resolution for us.

The current economic crisis has highlighted the fact that foreign debt has become for many countries — not just those that are part of the underdeveloped world, but many others around the world — a heavy burden that hinders them and endangers their growth, their inclusion and their creation of activities and jobs.

We know that many people are hoping that contractual clauses will solve the issue of debt restructuring. However, we believe that we have to change the international structure and financial architecture. The United Nations, which is a democratic, representative and equitable body, is the one entity that is able to do that. Setting these Basic Principles is a fundamental step towards ensuring that no one will suffer from the attacks by vulture funds that Argentina and many other countries are suffering from today. We welcome this resolution because it is a fundamental step for us to have a better world — a world free from vultures.

Ms. Rodríguez Gómez (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are truly experiencing what is called living history. We wish to send a warm embrace from the General Assembly to the President of the Argentine Republic, President Fernández. We send a warm greeting to her and her brave people because what has just happened in the Assembly is not just anything. As valiant Minister for Foreign Affairs Timerman, our South American brother, said, what has happened is bringing the voice of dignity of the people of our South America, Latin America and the Caribbean. What has occurred here is precisely a moment of dignity in which we overthrow the power of the vulture funds that spread misery and poverty throughout the world. We also venture to say that they lead to terrorist violence in other parts of the world.

Sovereign States are dominating and overpowering the vulture financial capital, which together with the media machinery is trying to impose its will on the world. What has occurred today, with all of the votes that bravely supported these principles, essentially ensures the sovereign possibility of regulating the financial capital of these vulture funds, which have subjected people to exploitation, misery, poverty and violence.

We are grateful and very happy to be in the Assembly. Once again, we are united as South Americans. We add our thanks to all the world's countries that, in this multilateral forum, are insisting on the fundamental principles of the United Nations: the principle of the self-determination of peoples, the principle of non-intervention of capitals in our sovereign States and countries, and the principle of the sovereign equality of States.

We have all come here to this necessary forum, as Foreign Minister Timerman has said, a forum that has taken historic steps and produced legal instruments that are relevant for all of humankind. We are very happy to have supported this vote and to have participated because we were also sponsors of a fundamental principle: the sovereign immunity of jurisdiction. We endorse the fact that what has occurred here will take away the power to act and govern from some funds and capitals that the people did not elect. It is the sovereign States, representing their people, that have the right to govern their destiny in a free, independent and sovereign manner.

I thank all the countries that have joined together and taken away stability from the vulture funds. Stability is what we must give to our people — stability, happiness and progress. This was a vote for the happiness of our people.

Mr. Rattray (Jamaica): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the 14 States members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). CARICOM aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and by the representative of Maldives on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States.

At the outset, CARICOM wishes to thank the Mission of Bolivia for its commitment and leadership during this process, which has culminated in the set of Basic Principles that have just been adopted by the Assembly.

CARICOM believes that these basic principles provide a useful framework for further discussions on debt restructuring towards the goal of making the process timely, orderly, effective and, most importantly, fair. As recent cases have highlighted, current market-based approaches to restructuring sovereign debt provide insufficient means by which to adequately address the vast amount of pre-existing debt owed to private creditors. It is therefore important that we agree to a Basic set of Principles that can underpin the negotiation of the orderly, constructive and consensual restructuring of the debt of sovereign States.

The matter of a multilateral framework for sovereign debt restructuring is of great interest to CARICOM member States in the light of the fact that unsustainably high debt burdens remain among the major challenges to the economic development of the region. Indeed, the average current debt-to-gross domestic product (GDP) ratio among CARICOM countries exceeds 70 per cent, with the most severely indebted countries having debt-to-GDP ratios in excess of 100 per cent. In several CARICOM countries, the primary surpluses required to reduce the stock of debt to sustainable levels range between 1.5 and 10 per cent of GDP. This scenario has fostered a situation where, across the subregion, debt servicing has far exceeded expenditure on social services, including health care and education, a fact that has had far-reaching implications for our overall socioeconomic development.

The situation becomes all the more critical as we move towards a post-2015 world and prepare, in mere weeks, to adopt, in this very Assembly, Agenda 2030, an agreement of the international community to pursue a sustainable development agenda with the eradication of poverty at its core. The placement of countries in debt distress on a sustainable debt path would enable them to achieve their prospects for economic recovery while simultaneously improving their ability to effectively meet their creditor obligations.

CARICOM member States' efforts to effectively address their unsustainable debt burdens have been constrained by their categorization as middle-income countries. This designation renders them ineligible for debt relief and severely limits their ability to access concessionary and grant-based financing. With a few exceptions, the region has not benefited from recent global debt-relief initiatives such as the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative or the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative.

In conclusion, CARICOM is of the view that indebted countries must be given an opportunity to undertake orderly debt-workout arrangements as a means of stabilizing their economies and returning to a path of sustained, inclusive economic growth. We believe that the Basic Principles on Sovereign Debt Restructuring Processes are therefore an important tool in arriving at this position, and we fully support resolution 69/319.

Mr. González Franco (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Paraguay, which holds the pro tempore chairmanship of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), welcomes the Basic Principles on Sovereign Debt Restructuring Processes. This set of principles, which must be observed in the restructuring of sovereign debt, was elaborated in order to establish a multilateral legal framework for debt-restructuring processes under resolution 69/247, of 2014, which established the Ad Hoc Committee on Sovereign Debt Restructuring Processes.

On behalf of the States parties to MERCOSUR, I should like to express our gratitude to the Plurinational State of Bolivia and the Argentine Republic, through their Permanent Representatives, for their leadership in the processes of consultation and negotiation that culminated today in the adoption of the Basic Principles, tools that will serve to limit the destructuring effect of risk capital funds.

Finally, I reiterate the rejection by the States parties to MERCOSUR of the attitude and the requests of a minority group of non-restructured bondholders of the sovereign debt of Argentina, whose action makes it difficult to reach a final agreement between debtors and creditors and endangers the financial stability of countries, as stated in the joint communiqué of the Presidents of the States parties to MERCOSUR, meeting on the occasion of the forty-eighth regular session of the MERCOSUR Council, held in Brasilia on 17 July.

Mr. Koncke (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is my privilege to speak on behalf of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) in order to underscore the importance of the adoption of resolution 69/319, entitled "Basic Principles on Sovereign Debt Restructuring Processes".

There are various reasons why we believe that today an important step has been taken. First, as we have stated on previous occasions, the States members of UNASUR firmly believe that the United Nations is the Organization that has the role and legitimacy necessary to deal with issues of development. We therefore believe that the General Assembly, as the most democratic body of the Organization where all members are equally represented, is the appropriate forum for dealing with economic and financial questions as well, considering the current challenges.

Secondly, it is vital that the international system be able to rely on a system for the restructuring of sovereign debt under fair conditions, with mutual benefits for both creditors and debtors, without in any way affecting the development or welfare of countries and their peoples.

Thirdly, UNASUR deems it necessary to move towards a reorganization of the international financial architecture in order to reduce the negative impacts of an unstable global financial system. Here we believe that the stability and predictability of the international financial architecture requires that sovereign debt restructuring processes be carried out and respected.

Fourthly, problems related to external debt affect the international community as a whole, including both developed and developing countries, and restrict the capacity to create the conditions necessary for the exercise of human rights, in particular economic, social and cultural rights. Countries must use their scarce resources to pay down debt instead of being able to invest in the welfare of their peoples. Debt crises are costly and detrimental to employment and productive investment and in general lead to cuts in public spending, including on health and education. Indebtedness for any nation is an impediment to growth and development, and it also contributes to increasing unemployment and poverty.

For all of those reasons, it was essential for the regional and international financial community to respond robustly while emphasizing the inherent link between financing and development, and between sustainable growth and debt sustainability against the backdrop of the actual repayment capacity of countries and while maintaining equal treatment among creditors. We therefore welcome the adoption of resolution 69/319, which is the outcome of a year's work in a process of open and transparent negotiations.

Faced with the problem of sovereign debt restructuring, which is increasingly part of international discussions, we highlight the importance of having identified a number of principles that, under international law, already govern any restructuring of sovereign debt under both general principles of law and customary norms. Undoubtedly, this is a great contribution by the General Assembly in compiling and codifying those principles, as it will be highly useful to advancing discussions on the establishment of a multilateral legal framework that will make them even more effective.

In conclusion, these principles will not only serve as a clear guide as to how processes of sovereign debt restructuring are carried out, but will also contribute to the upcoming discussions on the subject that we must continue to follow up at the United Nations.

Mr. Sareer (Maldives): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

Debt sustainability is a significant challenge facing many small island developing States (SIDS) that is stalling efforts towards sustainable development. It is known that SIDS' ratio of gross domestic product to debt in 2014 stood on average at 57 per cent, as compared to 44 per cent in all other middle- and lower-income countries, thereby making SIDS more severely indebted than other developing countries. Our unique and particular vulnerabilities contribute to that higher debt scenario.

The basic principles in resolution 69/319 are clear, concise and present a useful reference for future action and dialogue on debt restructuring. The discussion of those issues has long been recognized as important. AOSIS welcomes this resolution, which sets out the principles of transparency, impartiality, equality, sovereign immunity, sustainability, legitimacy and good-faith treatment for both debtors and creditors. The resolution has particular resonance as this time, as we are moving towards the implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We thereore welcome the adoption of this timely and important resolution. We look forward to continuing this conversation.

Mr. Llorentty Solíz (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is a pleasure, Madam, to have you preside over this important meeting of the General Assembly.

Given the time constraints, I will make a very brief statement in the context of my functions as Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Sovereign Debt Restructuring Processes, having been given that mandate by two resolutions of the Assembly.

I would first like very sincerely to commend the work of the Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations, Ambassador Marita Perceval, as well as, of course, the work of Ministers Timerman and Kicillof, whose personal dedication to this very important issue I have seen for myself. Through them, I would like to convey my greetings to President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, who, along with her Government, has had the courage to confront, in an absolutely decisive way, the scourge of vulture funds — not only when it comes to Argentina, but for many other countries, especially developing countries.

I also wish to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his support to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee, as well as the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session, His Excellency Mr. Sam Kutesa. I thank them both in particular not just because it is a matter of protocol, but because they have devoted personal efforts to this very important resolution 69/319. For instance, when the International Monetary Fund refused to meet with the Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee, it was an action by the Secretary-General and by the President of the General Assembly that led the Fund to pay attention to a draft resolution originating in the Assembly and a mandated Committee.

In that connection, I should also like to acknowledge the work done by the Group of 77 under the chairmanship of South Africa and its Ambassador, Kingsley Mamabolo. His team has been crucial in arriving at this afternoon's successful outcome. Of course, I am also grateful for the work of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, and especially the team of Richard Kozul-Wright, which also played a very important role that is now reflected in the resolution. I also cannot fail to mention the rest of the Bureau of the Ad Hoc Committee, including vice-Chairs Niluka Kadurugamuwa of Sri Lanka and Khanim Ibrahimova of Azerbaijan, as well as the Rapporteur, Khaled Benamadi of Algeria. Their work has also been crucial to this outcome. I also wish to thank the Permanent Mission of the Plurinational State of Bolivia for its efforts.

This resolution is important because we are not talking just about the financial system, as we would be led to believe. This resolution has to do with the opportunities for growth in our countries. And when we talk about opportunities for growth, we are also talking about opportunities for development. And if we are talking about development, we are talking about social and economic rights. In turn, we are talking about the quality of our political systems — and ultimately about the issues of greatest concern to the Organization. When they tell us that this is not the appropriate forum to discuss these issues, what we are really being told is that we must play the game when they control the decisions, when they own the ball and when they get to determine the size of the field. That is not democracy. It goes against the principles of the Organization.

While we of course respect the fact that some countries voted against the resolution, we do not understand their reasons. In reading each of the principles, it is difficult to be opposed to the principles of good faith and transparency, or any of the other seven principles. Therefore, while we can respect that position as part of the sovereign right of every State, in my capacity as Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee, I do want to draw the Assembly's attention to the attitude of the International Monetary Fund. The Fund is not just an agency belonging to certain countries, it is part of the United Nations system. It was repeatedly invited to the Committee's meetings, but its seat remained unoccupied throughout. The International Monetary Fund must be reformed. It has to be democratized.

Otherwise, it will not respond to the principles — I repeat — of the United Nations system.

I thank all Member States for their efforts in adopting this resolution, which no doubt will be the dividing line of before and after in addressing this issue at the Organization.

The Acting President: I would like to kindly request that members limit their statements in order to enable us to deal with the agenda items as intended today, as we have another item to come on our agenda.

Mr. Bishnoi (India): India is pleased with the Assembly's adoption today of resolution 69/319. At the outset, I would like to warmly congratulate the delegation of Argentina on having taken the lead on this issue over the past several months. I would particularly like to acknowledge the presence here today of Argentina's Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship, Mr. Héctor Timerman, and His Excellency the Argentine Minister of Finance. I would like to convey our appreciation to the Permanent Representative of Bolivia for his sterling guidance of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Sovereign Debt Restructuring Processes.

The issue of sovereign debt restructuring has lately held centre stage in global discussions. It is not linked to any one country, nor is it a problem only for developing countries. There is also ample evidence that the issue is directly linked to the issue of the inclusive development and macroeconomic and political stability of countries and their peoples' welfare. With its adoption of today's resolution, the Assembly is codifying and formalizing a set of basic principles for sovereign debt restructuring processes, arrived at through the work of the Ad Hoc Committee in accordance with the Assembly's mandate. In doing so it is laying down a set of simple yet powerful markers that can provide a very helpful template for dealing with the issue of sovereign debt and its restructuring.

The adoption of the resolution today is also very timely, coming as it does as we wind down a very eventful and productive sixty-ninth session and begin our work towards a historic seventieth. In exercising its role as the supreme and universal global legislative body, the General Assembly is making a pronouncement about an important issue and doing so meaningfully, and the fact that the adoption of this resolution today coincides with the widely anticipated endorsement of a new 2030 agenda for sustainable development could not have been more propitious.

The integrated and indeed universal nature of that new agenda calls for an integrated and wide-ranging approach to the means for achieving sustainable development. A fair and balanced resolution of sovereign debt issues, which these guiding principles can help promote, can be helpful in creating the conditions for continued inclusive growth in debtor countries as well as their sustainable development, and can also promote global macroeconomic stability. The principles themselves are non-binding and thus preserve countries' sovereign policy space for designing their borrowing instruments to suit their specific circumstances while also taking into account other relevant factors. We hope that voluntary adherence to the principles will contribute greatly to preventing debt crises and to creating more efficient and fair debt-restructuring processes.

Mr. Teo (Singapore): Singapore voted in favour of resolution 69/319 today. In our view, the non-binding principles for sovereign debt restructuring are a practical outcome and conclusion of the processes of the Ad Hoc Committee. We appreciate the efforts made to consider the complex and wide-ranging interests involved, and we note the principles' recognition that the contractual rights of all creditors must be taken into account in any debt restructuring.

Our position on considering improved approaches to sovereign debt restructuring is well known. Any further consideration of improved approaches must secure the active, inclusive participation and engagement of both debtor and creditor countries, as well as of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other established international and regional financial institutions. That will enable us to comprehensively consider the various diverse perspectives and to work towards a more collaborative and effective outcome. In that regard, the IMF may be better placed to take discussions on sovereign debt restructuring forward.

Mr. Hermida Castillo (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): Our delegation welcomes Mr. Héctor Timerman, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Argentina, and the rest of his team, and commends the work of the Argentine delegation, particularly Ambassador María Cristina Perceval. We would also like to thank Ambassador Sacha Llorentty Solíz of Bolivia for his leadership of the Ad Hoc Committee on Sovereign

Debt Restructuring Processes. We are grateful for the initiative of our sister republic, Argentina, in bringing this important debate on sovereign debt to the Assembly and helping to raise Member States' awareness of the importance of implementing mechanisms that can help prevent and resolve financial crises.

We are pleased that the Group of 77 and China has taken on this important initiative, and we welcome the adoption today of resolution 69/319, which covers the basic principles for sovereign debt restructuring. Our delegation voted in favour of the resolution in the belief that those principles should serve as a foundation for a legal framework for any future agreements we may wish to arrive at for the benefit of all our peoples. They are also essential at this crucial moment in our history, when we are preparing to adopt a post-2015 agenda that includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets, since they will enable us to establish the political space we need to implement those goals.

Nicaragua would like to emphasize the undisputed role of the United Nations, particularly the General Assembly, as a universal, democratic and equitable forum that can help us ensure the legitimacy of the most important decisions we have to make, particularly those on economic and financial issues, which affect every person living on this planet. We regret that we could not count on the participation in the discussion of this topic of other relevant actors, whose absence displays a lack of political will and interest in resolving an issue that affects the entire international community, regardless of levels of development.

While because of this we have had to put to a vote a resolution that should have been adopted by consensus, this situation should be of equal concern for developed and developing countries. All Member States should work to achieve debt sustainability, which is essential to supporting growth and achieving national and international development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals.

Mr. Reyes Rodríguez (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are very grateful to you for overseeing our work, Madam. I would like to welcome the presence of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Argentina and Venezuela and of Argentina's Minister of Finance. We congratulate Ambassador María Cristina Perceval, who was fully involved in this effort and whose birthday it is today.

Today is also a historic day for the United Nations. For the first time, after decades of discussion within the framework of the Organization, we finally have a set of principles for guiding States and other international actors in solving the problems associated with foreign debt. For years, our peoples have made enormous sacrifices to honour their financial foreign commitments, compromising their right to development and to their own basic living conditions. By contrast, wealthy usurers and speculators had raised their expectations, rationales and ambitions to profit from hunger, illiteracy, disease and the denial of the dream of a better future for our children, women and men. Foreign debt and the actions of vulture funds predators are scourges affecting all developing countries.

Thanks to the unity of the Group of 77 and China, with South Africa as its Chair, and to the leadership of Mr. Llorentty Solíz, Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Sovereign Debt Restructuring Processes, the United Nations now has a set of clear and strong principles to face the problem of resolving the problem of sovereign debt. But that is just the beginning of the long path we must follow if we wish to find a just and rational solution to the problem of the foreign debt of developing countries, which we have paid over and over again merely for its accrued interest. Those principles serve as a confirmation of the solidarity of the international community with the commitment of peoples and authorities, and in particular that of leaders, including the President of Argentina, who have made social justice the heart of their work. We will not be able to ensure that the countries of the South will receive justice in the future, but we have made a vital contribution to establishing an international framework that challenges the impunity enjoyed by the speculators who have ruined our countries.

Mr. Olguín Cigarroa (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We have today adopted resolution 69/319 on the Basic Principles on Sovereign Debt Restructuring Processes, submitted by the Group of 77 and China (G-77). We endorse the statements made on behalf of the G-77 and the Union of South American Nations. We also welcome the presence of Mr. Héctor Marcos Timerman, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Mr. Axel Kicillof, Minister of Economy and Public Finances of Argentina, and commend Argentina's great efforts to introduce to this body a subject of global impact that requires a global response. The perseverance of the Permanent Representative of Argentina, Ambassador

María Cristina Perceval, and members of her Mission has been of particular importance.

In our view, the restructuring sovereign debt is an issue of the global agenda whose importance merits discussion in the United Nations, the global forum par excellence where all countries of the international community can participate and contribute. Thus, sovereign debt has been addressed in the two documents that have distinguished this sixty-ninth session: the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, in section E of its chapter II (resolution 69/313), on debt and debt sustainability, and Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development, which in point 3 of its target 17, appeals to countries to help promote long-term debt sustainability, including restructuring processes for debt.

The evidence shows us that countries remain indebted, and that it has become increasingly necessary to have ules on sustainability and debt restructuring processes. Today's resolution 69/319 will help to open a debate on this issue in which other international bodies will also be able to add their voice. There is a need to include this matter within the framework of international standards and apply the rule of law, and to take into account the impact of debt on development and the quality of life of peoples and the central role of the General Assembly in addressing issues of global impact, such as the resolution that we have adopted. These are all elements that Chile bore in mind when we lent our support to the resolution.

Mr. Antonio de Aguiar Patriota (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to welcome to the General Assembly Ministers Héctor Timerman and Axel Kicillof, other officials from Argentina, including Permanent Representative María Cristina Perceval, and commend her leadership on this issue of strategic importance to all Members of the Organization. I also take this opportunity to commend the Permanent Representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Ambassador Llorentty Solíz, and to thank him for his dedication in conducting the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Sovereign Debt Restructuring Processes over the past few months.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, Paraguay on behalf of the Common Market of the South, and Uruguay on behalf of the Union of South American Nations.We would like to make a few comments in our national capacity.

The issue of debt restructuring has crucial implications for the stability and balance of the international financial system, and for the future implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The current architecture for restructuring debt is not sustainable and has to be amended to allow for the achievement of the 17 sustainable development goals and their 169 targets. The need to amend the current architecture was recognized in the reform and amending of the pari passu clauses and the collective action proposed by the International Capital Markets Association, with the endorsement of the International Monetary Fund, and recently by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, as adopted in July in Ethiopia.

The 10 Basic Principles that we have adopted today are the outcome of lengthy consultations in the United Nations and reflect reasonable parameters for the effective, sustainable, fair and orderly conduct of sovereign debt restructuring processes. The delegation of Brazil regrets the fact that not all international financial mechanisms participated in the discussions of the Ad Hoc Committee on Sovereign Debt Restructuring Processes, but we would urge them to take those into account in a timely fashion.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 13.

Agenda item 120

Strengthening of the United Nations system

Draft resolution (A/69/L.87/Rev.1)

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Iraq to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.87/Rev.1.

Mr. Alhakim (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): The Republic of Iraq, in its capacity as Chair of the Group of Arab States for the month of September, has the honour of introducing, on behalf of all Arab countries and 52 States Members of the United Nations, draft resolution A/69/L.87/Rev.1, entitled, "Raising the flags of non-member observer States at the United Nations," under agenda item 120, "Strengthening of the United Nations system".

The draft resolution before the Assembly appears to be rather restrained, but it conveys a great deal symbolically. It has been drafted according to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and reaffirms our faith in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small. The draft resolution pertains to the participation of non-member observer States that maintain permanent observer missions at Headquarters and recalls that the State of Palestine became a non-member observer State at the United Nations on 29 November 2012, and previous relevant resolutions.

Paragraph 1 of the draft resolution stipulates that

> "the flags of non-member observer States at the United Nations maintaining permanent observer missions at Headquarters shall be raised at Headquarters and United Nations offices following the flags of the States Members of the United Nations".

Paragraph 2 requests the Secretary-General to

> "take the measures necessary for the implementation of this decision during the seventieth session of the General Assembly and within 20 days of the adoption of the present resolution".

In conclusion, I would urge Member States to lend their full support to and to vote in favour of the draft resolution because it represents an important step towards supporting the Palestinian people and their right to self-determination, independence and their due place among States.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now proceed to consider draft resolution A/69/L.87/Rev.1.

Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of vote before the voting, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Braun (Germany): Germany has thoroughly considered the draft resolution before it today, the adoption of which changes decades of an uncontested and established practice within the United Nations. The raising of flags at Headquarters has always been associated with full membership within the United Nations, in accordance with the Secretary-General's Flag Code of 1952 and regulations dating from 1967. Germany is unaware of any compelling reason that would justify changing the established practice. That is why Germany will abstain in the voting on draft resolution A/69/L.87/Rev.1.

Our abstention should in no way give rise to any interpretation on the state of relations between Germany, the Holy See and Palestine. Germany is aware that the Holy See is not a sponsor of the draft resolution. Germany firmly believes in a negotiated two-State solution and strongly supports the aim of establishing an independent State of Palestine, living side by side in peace and security with Israel. We actively worked towards that end for years and contributed to the development of governmental institutions and State infrastructure in the Palestinian territories.

However, a two-State solution that is not based on a comprehensive final status agreement that ends all claims and fulfils the aspirations of both sides will not be sustainable. We call on both sides to engage in serious negotiations without conditions or further delay. Germany stands ready to support all efforts towards relaunching a substantial negotiation process and underlines the importance of renewed engagement on the part of the international community, including the Quartet and regional actors.

Mr. Nickert (Austria): Draft resolution A/69/L.87/Rev.1, before us today, deals with the display of flags — a matter that has always been associated with full membership of the Organization. It has to be kept in mind that the decision today will set a precedent for the future that will also apply to all future observer States. We also note that many of the current Member States from the European Union, including Austria, had observer status before joining the Organization as full Members and had to wait for their full admission before their flag was raised at Headquarters. That represents the common practice for all international organizations.

We were not provided with a convincing reason of a general nature to justify changing the long-held practice of limiting the display of flags to those of Member States. Furthermore, we would like to point out that a display of flags at all United Nations premises is the prerogative of the Secretary-General, as mandated by the General Assembly in resolution 92 (I) of 1946.

I would like to note in that context that our position does not affect Austria's support of Palestine's wish to become a full Member of the United Nations, as part of a comprehensive solution to the conflict. Together with our partners in the European Union, we have consistently worked to advance the Palestinian

Authority's State-building efforts, and we will continue to do so. We believe that the focus needs to be on a return to meaningful negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians in order to achieve a lasting and just solution to the conflict, which can only be a two-State solution. Based on the considerations of principles heretofore outlined, Austria will therefore abstain in the voting on the draft resolution.

Ms. Power (United States of America): The United States has long been, is today, and will remain committed to achieving the peace that Palestinians and Israelis deserve: two States for two peoples, with a sovereign, viable, and independent Palestinian State, living side by side in peace and security with a Jewish and democratic Israel. We all know that a sustainable and just resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will be reached only through hard choices and compromise and negotiated by the parties. Raising the Palestinian flag outside Headquarters is not an alternative to negotiations and will not bring the parties closer to peace.

The United States will vote against draft resolution A/69/L.87/Rev.1, but this vote is not a vote for the status quo or a rejection of Palestinian aspirations for statehood. Our vote reflects the reality that the parties themselves must ultimately take the constructive and responsible steps required to achieve a two-State solution and end the cycle of violence and suffering that has persisted for far too long in the Middle East.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote before the voting.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.87/Rev.1, entitled "Raising the flags of non-member observer States at the United Nations".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Botnaru (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have also become sponsors of A/69/L.87/Rev.1: Afghanistan, Argentina, Bangladesh, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Chad, Comoros, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, El Salvador, Guinea, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Namibia, Nicaragua, Niger, Pakistan, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, the Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey and Zimbabwe.

The Acting President: A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Fiji, France, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zimbabwe

Against:

Australia, Canada, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Palau, Tuvalu, United States of America

Abstaining:

Andorra, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Monaco, Myanmar, Nauru, Netherlands, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Samoa, Singapore, Slovakia, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Vanuatu

Draft resolution A/69/L.87/Rev.1 was adopted by 119 votes to 8, with 45 abstentions (resolution 69/320).

[Subsequently, the delegation of Zambia advised the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of vote, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Prosor (Israel): Once again, the Assembly has convened to debate a crucially important matter. Member States will be asked to make a decision that will reflect on how this institution will be perceived. No, I am not referring to the Palestinian flag. The lives of Israelis and Palestinians will remain the same whether or not a Palestinian flag flies in New York. I am speaking of a much more important decision. The real question we face is not whether the Palestinians will raise a flag, but whether the United Nations will raise a white flag and surrender the principles of this institution itself.

Next month, I will complete more than four years as Israel's Permanent Representative to the United Nations. During my time here, I have met with diplomats from all around the world, I have participated in many meetings of the General Assembly and the Security Council, and I have even had the honour to preside over this very Assembly. In my four years, I have seen hypocrisy, I have seen duplicity and I have seen a triple standard: one for democracies, one for dictatorships and a special standard designed only for Israel. I thought I had seen everything, but I have to admit that this time the Palestinians have managed to take cynicism to a whole new level.

The goal of resolution 69/320 is a photo opportunity. The Palestinians want to bring together world dignitaries and the media to gather around and watch as Mahmoud Abbas raises a flag. They plan to use the prestige of the United Nations as a backdrop for this charade. Surprise, surprise — they did all this in contravention of all the established rules and procedures of the United Nations. During every session of the Assembly, hundreds of resolutions are adopted and hundreds of decisions are taken, from the most significant to the merely procedural. Yet, I cannot remember one time — not a single one — where Member States were not given an opportunity for discussion, debate and reflection.

Representatives here in this Hall know better than anyone else how exhausting, cumbersome and frustrating this process can sometimes be. Do we always enjoy this process? Probably not, yet we do it because we all understand that this deliberative and collaborative process represents the ideals that this institution was supposed to stand for: democracy, transparency and open communication. We do it because, although we have real differences, we all value the process and have respect for the countries represented here — their points of view and beliefs. We all understand that this is the only way that this institution can function.

However, in my time here, I have learned that there is one delegation that all those rules and procedures do not apply to. Again and again, the Palestinians seem to be able to do whatever they want and are free to act with impunity. In short, they have learned that the more they say no, the more the international community says yes to their every whim and caprice. So it is no surprise that the Palestinians show no regard for the values of this institution and that they cynically manipulate the United Nations to score political points. Time and again, the Palestinians use and abuse the United Nations. The sad part is that delegations in this Hall allow them to get away with it.

Let us consider the events of the past two weeks. As the summer began to wind down and this session was drawing to a close, the Palestinians surprised Member States with a draft resolution proposing to change a rule that has been in existence since the United Nations was founded. Did they circulate a zero draft of the resolution? Perhaps they just forgot. Did they invite Member States to any informal consultation? I guess they could not be bothered. Did they negotiate the language of the resolution with Member States? Of course not. They knew that most Member States would sign on the dotted line no matter what it said. As a matter of fact, the Palestinian delegation simply announced its plan, promoted it in a dishonest and manipulative manner, and expected Member States to fall in line behind it.

As if this behaviour were not bad enough, the story does not end there. Not only did the Palestinians blatantly disregard United Nations practices, they deliberately deceived Member States. When they introduced their initiative, the Palestinians informed Member States that the Vatican was a partner in their plan. Apparently, the Vatican did not get the memo. This blatant lie was exposed to all by the media. As a matter of fact, the Vatican declared that it is not a partner to this initiative; it did not ask for it and it has no aspiration to raise its flag at the United Nations. The Palestinians were caught red-handed violating every principle of honesty and integrity we hold dear.

Yet, despite this brazen deception, which every delegation in this Hall knows of, many representatives here still voted to adopt this resolution. Voting in favour of the resolution means that, when it comes to the Palestinians, the standard rules no longer apply. More important than whether we permit the Palestinians to fly a flag is whether we permit them to undermine the rules and procedures and, ultimately, the credibility of this institution. How ironic is it that this resolution was considered under the agenda item "Strengthening of the United Nations system", when it clearly weakens and undermines the United Nations.

Let no one in this Hall or around the world be fooled by the outcome of today's vote. The Assembly would vote to declare that the Earth was flat if the Palestinians proposed it. By the way, the European Union (EU) would probably try to reach a consensus to abstain in the voting, but some EU countries would consider it a matter of principle to declare that the world is indeed flat if it now is how the Palestinians see it. Speaking of consensus, apparently the EU's principles of maintaining a holy consensus cannot withstand Palestinian pressure. Yet they stand firm when the consensus is against Israel.

However, no vote can turn an empty, symbolic gesture into a State. The international community must make it clear to the Palestinians that the only way to achieve statehood is through direct negotiations. As long as the Palestinians believe that they can achieve their political goals without making concessions, they will continue to avoid taking the difficult decisions needed for peace. Maybe the international community should recommend that the Palestinians download the Waze GPS application so that they can find their way to the negotiating table. Then they would be able to discover that the distance from Ramallah to Jerusalem is less than 10 miles. There is no need to fly halfway around the world to New York in order to make peace.

Unfortunately, instead of trying to guide the Palestinians down the path to peace, the international community is helping them to ride off the tracks. We do not need support groups or preconditions that only complicate the situation. Too many are addicted to the process. This is not a meeting of Diplomats Anonymous. What we do need is for the international community to tell the Palestinians to go back to the negotiating table. Enough with empty symbols, enough with political showmanship, enough with hijacking the United Nations agenda. Stop stalling and start negotiating.

Palestinians and Israelis need real steps to peace, not empty gestures. The vote today may serve the interests of Palestinians leaders, but it will not help the Palestinian people.

The whole situation would be different if the flag they want to raise represented democratic values, which are all too rare in the region. Those who support raising this flag should ask themselves: is it a flag of good governance? Is it a flag of gender equality? Is it a flag of free elections, so desperately needed in a place where President Abbas is in his 11th year of a five-year term?

If the international community does not demand that the Palestinians enact these basic rights and freedoms, the flag they raise will be a flag of disappointment rather than hope, and of failure rather than progress.

The people of Israel seek peace with our neighbours. Just this morning, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met with Prime Minister David Cameron in London and declared once again that he was ready to come and resume direct negotiations with the Palestinians, anywhere, without preconditions.

We all remember the historic images of Prime Minister Begin and President Sadat, and of Prime Minister Rabin and King Hussein, coming together in peace. History proves to us that negotiations can be fruitful, that peace is possible and that we can create a new reality for the peoples of the region.

And now, in my final statement as Israel's Permanent Representative, I say to the Assembly that I look forward to seeing the image of an Israeli Prime

Minister and a Palestinian leader standing side by side, raising the flags of our two peoples, living together in peace. That would be a photo truly worth taking.

Mr. Radomski (Poland): Poland takes the floor to explain its decision to support the draft resolution on raising the flags of non-member observer States, the Holy See and Palestine, at the United Nations. We would like to emphasize that we treat resolution 69/320 as a technical matter, without any consequences for the position of Poland on the issue of the Middle East peace process. A flag is a symbol. People fight and sometimes die for what it represents. A flag is an important element of identity. We the people of Poland know how much it means. The Polish flag was our symbol at a time when there was no Poland on the maps of the world.

Let me reiterate that Poland supports the settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the form of a comprehensive political agreement between the parties to the conflict guaranteeing a lasting and durable peace. We share the view that the only possible way to resolve the conflict is through direct negotiations between the parties. It is important that they refrain from unilateral measures and acts on the ground that undermine confidence in the viability of the two-State solution.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): France voted in favour of the draft resolution submitted today that authorizes non-member observer States to raise their flags at the United Nations following those of Member States.

This vote is first of all a vote in favour of the two-State solution, which must remain our common goal; it is more than ever that of France. France has also made the choice of consistency. As early as 1982, before the Knesset, President Mitterrand called for the creation of a Palestinian State. France has since then not diverged from that path, supporting at each stage the enhancement of the the status of Palestine. In 2011, France voted in favour of the admission of Palestine as a member of UNESCO. In 2012, it voted in favour of resolution 67/19, which made Palestine a non-member observer State of our Organization.

Allowing Palestine to raise its flag at the United Nations is a new step in that direction. France could not but once again show its commitment to the right of Palestinians to a State and to the two-State solution, which is today in danger. France misses no opportunity to reiterate Israel's right to exist and to live in safety.

We agree that this vote is primarily symbolic. But symbols are essential in politics, particularly for the Palestinian people, who should not despair of the future. This flag is therefore a powerful symbol and a glimmer of hope. Let us have the courage and the clear-sightedness to say that, unfortunately, every day that goes by takes us further from the two-State solution. The pursuit of the illegal settlement process is a direct threat thereto. This absence of political perspective is not only unfair to the Palestinian people; it is also dangerous for Israel, for the other States of the region, for the European Union and for the world as a whole. It fuels despair and leads to violence.

We must therefore be clear. The negative dynamic that is unfolding before our eyes cannot serve the interests of the parties. It can only fuel hatred and extremism, on which terrorists feed, especially Daesh. In this disturbing context, every opportunity must be seized to recall the hope of the two-State solution. France believes that this conflict can be resolved only by the establishment of an independent, viable and democratic Palestinian State, living in peace and security side by side with Israel.

But while we appreciate the importance of symbols, we cannot be satisfied with gestures alone. Given the gravity of the situation, symbols are no longer enough. All that counts is action. France, which for more than a year has been endeavouring to create new prospects and a credible dynamic, is more convinced of this than ever before. Everyone agrees that the peace process that we have pursued for 20 years has failed. For France, credible and strong action can be based only on two complementary pillars. In the short term, we must promote increased commitment on the part of the international community through international support for the peace process that complements the efforts of the Quartet and strengthens its ability to generate consensus. Following that, a framework must be defined for future negotiations to which the Security Council can contribute in due course.

The seventieth session of the General Assembly must mark the launch of the first pillar of this action with the establishment of an international support group that includes new partners alongside the members of the Quartet, namely, the permanent members of the Security Council and some Arab and European countries. Doing nothing is not an option and would run the risk of major destabilization. France advocates action and the convergence of the international community's efforts towards the shared goal of a two-State solution in order to achieve peace and justice. That is the rationale behind France's vote today and of its ongoing commitment.

Mr. Díaz de la Guardia Beuno (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to raise two brief points with respect to resolution 69/320, on raising the flags of non-member observer States at the United Nations.

First, Spain's vote in favour of the resolution was consistent with its support for resolution 67/19. Secondly, Spain's vote in favour should not be interpreted as recognizing Palestine as a State, which can occur only in the framework of a final and comprehensive settlement in the Middle East peace process based on a two-State solution reached in the course of negotiations between the parties that guarantees peace and security for both, respect for the rights of all citizens, and overall stability.

Mr. Carrera Castro (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): Guatemala thanks the State of Palestine for its initiative concerning resolution 69/320. The Government of Guatemala recognizes and supports Palestine as a free, independent and sovereign State.

We considered this initiative carefully. We believe that the resolution focuses on one of the exclusive rights of a full Member of the Organization, as distinct from an observer State. In that regard, we should have liked to see the resolution discussed by the membership, and to have had enough time to consider its implications and precedents respecting other international organizations and their observer States. We therefore decided to abstain in the voting on the resolution adopted today. We reiterate that our decision to abstain is without prejudice to the excellent relations we enjoy with the observer States of the United Nations and is confined to the procedural and institutional context.

Mr. Skoog (Sweden): Sweden decided to vote in favour of resolution 69/320. That is a natural step following Palestinian State-building efforts, recognized by the General Assembly on 29 November 2012 in resolution 67/19, in which Palestine was accorded status as a non-member observer State at the United Nations. It is also a logical consequence of the Swedish recognition of the State of Palestine on 30 October 2014. That recognition was aimed at making the parties to the conflict less unequal, providing a positive injection into the dynamic of the Middle East peace process, and rendering the two-State solution possible again.

Unfortunately, the situation on the ground has worsened and the peace process is stalled. We hope that the General Assembly, with this vote today, will send forth a tiny ripple of hope to the young generations in the region — Israelis and Palestinians — that peace is still possible.

Mr. Aliyev (Azerbaijan): Azerbaijan voted in favour of resolution 69/320. We consider this initiative to be a reflection of the legitimate will and aspiration of the State of Palestine to become a full-fledged Member of the United Nations. We reiterate our support for Palestine's application for admission to membership of the United Nations and look forward to a solution to that issue based on international law. Azerbaijan remains committed to a two-State solution that will bring peace and stability to the Middle East.

Mr. Sauer (Finland): Let me start by reiterating Finland's steadfast support for the non-member observer status of Palestine at the United Nations, in line with resolution 67/19, which Finland voted in favour of in 2012, as well as our support for the similar status enjoyed by the Holy See.

However, we have considered resolution 69/320, before us today, on its own merits and without direct reference to the situations of Palestine and the Holy See. We have considered that the current practice of raising only the flags of Member States at United Nations Headquarters, as stipulated by the United Nations flag code and regulations, has been well in line with the common practice in all international organizations. We therefore decided to abstain in the voting on the resolution.

Finland is committed to a just and comprehensive resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in accordance with the common European Union position, and continues to lend its support to the formation of the Palestinian State as part of the negotiated two-State solution.

Mr. Menkveld (Netherlands): The General Assembly has decided today to change the protocol to include henceforth the flags of non-member observer States at the United Nations. The Kingdom of the Netherlands chose to abstain in the voting on resolution 69/320 for procedural reasons. The Kingdom of the Netherlands is not convinced that compelling reasons exist for changing the established practices concerning the flag protocol at the United Nations.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands would also like to reiterate that the Netherlands will continue its long-standing support for the Palestinians. We support the Palestinian State-building efforts. Our contribution in such key sectors as water, agriculture, security and the rule of law totals approximately €50 million a year. Just recently, we pledged an additional contribution of €2 million to enable the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East to continue its landmark education programme.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands remains in favour of a two-State solution, with the State of Israel and an independent, democratic, sovereign and viable State of Palestine living side by side in peace, security and mutual recognition. The Kingdom of the Netherlands is committed to a just and lasting peace and supports initiatives for a renewed approach to the peace process, including a new format for negotiations with a substantial role for the European Union (EU) and Arab partners alongside the United States. The Kingdom of the Netherlands fully subscribes to the EU position on parametres, which we believe provides a basis for achieving consensus on a way forward.

Mr. Menelaou (Cyprus): Cyprus abstained in the voting on resolution 69/320, on raising the flags of non-member observer States at the United Nations. Cyprus's abstention should be viewed in the light of the challenges and issues that have arisen from the situation in Cyprus since 1974, which compel us to adhere to the principle that only full Members of the United Nations should be entitled to all the privileges enjoyed by the Members of the Organization.

Cyprus has recognized the State of Palestine since 1988, and we voted in favour of resolution 67/19, which acknowledged Palestine as a non-member observer State in this Organization. Furthermore, in December 2012, Palestine's representation in Cyprus was upgraded to a full embassy and the Palestinian Ambassador was added to our protocol list of foreign diplomatic missions. Cyprus looks forward to the revival of a peace process aimed at achieving a two-State solution for an independent, democratic, viable and contiguous Palestinian State within its 1967 borders, living side by side in peace and security with Israel and its other neighbours.

Mr. Ellinger (Czech Republic): The Czech Republic has considered resolution 69/320 based on its substance and in an objective manner, unrelated to consideration of any individual observer State that the resolution may concern now or in the future. The Czech Republic fully aligns itself with the principle that raising a flag at the headquarters of any international organization is a right reserved exclusively to the members of such organizations. Such has been the practice so far not only in the United Nations but in other international organizations as well. We have not been presented with any convincing reasons for departing from that principle and established practice, since the participation of non-member observer States in the meetings and work of the General Assembly is in no way affected by the measures proposed in the resolution. For those reasons, the Czech Republic abstained in the voting on the resolution.

Mr. Hannigan (Iceland): In December 2011, Iceland recognized Palestine as an independent and sovereign State. In November 2012, Iceland voted in favour of granting the State of Palestine observer status at the United Nations. Iceland would like to see Palestine become a State Member of the United Nations as soon as possible. Flying a flag is not a substitute for membership, but it will underline the presence and participation of the State of Palestine in the work of the United Nations. The flying of observer State flags will be a new tradition, but we see no danger of its blurring the line between members and observers. We therefore welcomed resolution 69/320 and voted in favour of it.

Mr. Meek (United Kingdom): The Government of the United Kingdom decides its voting position based on the text of each draft resolution presented. It has traditionally been the case that only flags of States Members of the United Nations are flown at its Headquarters. Despite our long-held support for the creation of a Palestinian State, we have not been provided with any compelling reason to justify changing that long-standing practice. We have therefore chosen to abstain on resolution 69/320.

Our abstention does not change our long-standing position on resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. A just and lasting settlement is long overdue. The prospect of a peace agreement has been diminishing in recent years, and a clear political horizon is desperately needed. The worsening situation on the ground in the occupied Palestinian territories is of great concern and must be addressed. As we said when Palestine was granted non-member observer State status in November 2012, we want to see a Palestinian State represented throughout all the organs of the United Nations.

However, it remains our firm belief that a negotiated two-State solution is the only way to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict once and for all, and that it remains the best way to achieve Palestinian national aspirations in reality and on the ground. Our priority continues to be one of working with the parties and our international partners to safeguard the prospects for a two-State solution and create an environment conducive to a return to peace talks. We will continue to encourage and support both the Palestinian and Israeli leadership in taking the difficult decisions needed to achieve peace. That is the only way to end the occupation and to deliver the peace and security that both Israelis and Palestinians so deserve.

Mr. Zaayman (South Africa): South Africa wishes to be among the first to endorse and congratulate this non-member observer State of the United Nations. Our long and principled support of the Palestinian people's inalienable right to self-determination is informed by our own history and struggle for freedom, justice and a high regard for human rights. The struggle of the people of Palestine has been long and full of upheaval, but with the passing of time, their resilience and persistence has brought them closer and a step further towards their cherished goals.

South Africa wishes to reaffirm its support for international efforts aimed at establishing a viable Palestinian State, existing side by side in peace with Israel, within international recognized borders based on those existing on 4 June 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Ms. Stener (Norway): Resolution 69/320 deals with the question of raising flags, which is traditionally associated with membership in all international organizations. In our view, the resolution constitutes a precedent that contributes to erasing the difference between member States and observers in international organizations. That is why Norway abstained in the voting on the resolution. That should in no way be interpreted as a change in Norway's position supporting Palestine as a non-member observer State within the United Nations.

Norway continues to support the vision of two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side within secure and recognized borders. A comprehensive, just and lasting peace can be achieved only on the basis of a negotiated solution between the parties. We appeal to both sides to urgently resume comprehensive negotiations.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote for this meeting. We will now hear statements after the adoption of resolution 69/320.

Ms. Rodríguez Gómez (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): Today we have seen an afternoon of justice in the General Assembly through our adoption of resolution 69/319, by which we deprived vulture capital funds of their power, and resolution 69/320, by which we approved the raising of the Palestinian flag.

We have listened carefully to every speaker, because there has unquestionably been a great deal of food for thought. If we really believe in this — and I think that has been the case today — we have voted not just for raising the flag, we have voted for what the flag of the Palestinian State means and symbolizes. And we have therefore also voted for the right of the Palestinian people to return to their territory and their right not to be killed. That began with their territorial displacement and has now led to the terrible slaughter of a people.

I know that there is a shared concern in the hearts of all those who voted in favour of raising that flag and in the conscience of all the countries who voted for it. We know about the terrible and continued violations of human rights of the Palestinian people, who are being exterminated. I emphasize that the issue now is not just one of defending territory but of defending a people's very existence, and it is for that vital reason that we raise our voices and open our consciences and our hearts today.

This year, Pope Francis called the President of the Palestinian State an angel of peace. We say that all the children boys, girls, women and elderly people who continue to resist extermination and the violation of their human rights are also angels of peace. Therefore, if we truly believe in the existence of two States, how much longer will we have to wait for Palestine to be a State enjoying full rights in the Organization? How much longer will we have to bear witness to the slaughter of the Palestinian people? I have heard the arguments of the delegations that opposed the resolution, and I have just one thing to say. Theirs was the voice of the arrogant forces of war. There is no other way to describe such arrogance when the entire world does not support such criminal, bellicose stances.

We in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela warmly embrace the Palestinian people. We express our commitment to their cause and call on all peoples to join together so that the search for true peace may continue. It is very hard to talk of a State in terms of equality when children are being killed and families burned. It is very difficult to talk of a State in terms of equality when jailers force-feed prisoners. It is very difficult to talk of equality of States and peace when there is territorial segregation in every sense of the term.

I know that the vote that took place today in the General Assembly came from the hearts and consciences of all present. There is concern as to whether the best will exists to move towards a true process of peace so that the Palestinian State can be recognized and enjoy full rights in the Organization. Let us move forward and reaffirm our support for the right to determination of that fraternal people, which has resisted military savagery and seen its rights trampled upon for decades.

Our afternoon today concludes as an afternoon of justice. We stand side by side with peoples and their quest for justice.

Mr. Timerman (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Argentine Republic and its people are the children of a struggle for liberation. The Argentine Republic recognizes the right to self-determination of peoples and the territorial integrity of States. The Argentine Republic believes that the only entity with the right to decide on the existence of a Palestinian State is the Palestinian people itself, which must not be pressured or to decide its own future or burdened with conditions. That is why the Argentine Republic recognizes the Palestinian State as a sovereign State.

We should have liked to vote today on the inclusion of the Palestinian State as a full member of the General Assembly. However, since the Organization still needs reforms, the Palestinian State cannot be a Member because its membership first has to be approved by a minority of countries in the Security Council. We therefore happily voted for the inclusion of the Palestinian flag among those of the other countries represented in front of this building.

Since the Holy See itself will be represented with its flag, allow me to reiterate a statement made by Pope Francis: Let us tear down walls and build bridges. Now is the time for us to do so with the Palestinian people. We give the Palestinian people the right to decide for itself on the creation of a Palestinian State. The Assembly gives it the right, without the Security Council's say-so, to be able to vote on the inclusion of the Palestinian State as a full Member.

Mr. Alhakim (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the Group of Arab States, I take the floor again to express sincere thanks and appreciation to all for their efforts and to all those who voted in favour of resolution 69/320, which reminds us that the whole world stands by people languishing under colonization. I congratulate the Government and the people of Palestine on the adoption of this resolution, which is symbolic. Within a legal framework, it represents a step towards the establishment of a Palestinian State, with East Jerusalem as its capital, within the pre-1967 borders. The resolution, which is based on international law, is important for the following reasons.

The resolution is in line with resolution 67/19 of 2012, which accorded to Palestine non-member observer State status in the United Nations. Secondly, it falls within the framework of the right to raise a flag that has a cultural and symbolic value for the Palestinian people. Thirdly, it sends a message from the General Assembly that the Israeli occupation and the siege imposed on the Palestinian people are not welcome at the United Nations. The Charter of the United Nations affirms the right to self-determination of people languishing under occupation. The raising of the Palestinian flag is a testament to the serious commitment of the international community to the establishment of a contiguous, independent Palestinian State based on the pre-1967 borders.

Mr. Eler (Turkey): Today we took a symbolic yet important step in order to address the historical injustice against the Palestinian people. It can be considered as another milestone on the path towards Palestine's full membership of the United Nations. To that end, a historic decision was taken by this body when Palestine was accorded non-member observer status on 29 November 2012. On that day, Prime Minister Davutoğlu, who was then Foreign Minister of Turkey, came to New York and addressed the General Assembly to express our heartfelt support of Palestine. That day, in his speech, Prime Minister Davutoğlu said,

> "If we are to talk about an international order and place our trust in the United Nations system, then the Palestineian flag should fly beside this building ... That is our responsibility to

the Palestinian people ... Our vision for justice, international order and human rights will not be achieved until we see the flag of the State of Palestine standing side by side with ours, as a full Member of the United Nations. And that day will come soon" (*A/67/PV.44, p. 10*).

Mr. Dehghani (Islamic Republic of Iran): The Islamic Republic of Iran welcomes the decision of the General Assembly to adopt resolution 69/320 on raising the flags of non-member observer States at the United Nations. The number of Member States that sponsored the resolution and the number of votes cast in its favour demonstrate the importance that the international community and world public opinion attach to the right of peoples to self-determination. We have fully supported the objective of the resolution and sponsored the text.

The non-member observer States participate in the sessions and work of the Organization as States. It is therefore quite logical to see their flags raised at the Headquarters and other offices of the United Nations. Since the State of Palestine also falls under the category of non-member observer States, we believe that the resolution acquires more importance and deserves special attention and support. By voting in favour of the resolution, we sent a message of solidarity with the Government and people of the State of Palestine. We earnestly hope that what the people of Palestine deserve — that is, to live free from occupation, acquire full independence and take their rightful place among members of the international community — will soon be realized.

Mr. Abbas (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): Today's vote in favour of raising the flag of Palestine as a non-member observer State at the United Nations is a great achievement. However, it is more important that the international community redouble its efforts to end the occupation of Palestine and assist the Palestinian people in achieving their independence in order to give Palestine full membership, on an equal footing with all the States members of the General Assembly.

Mr. Llorentty Solíz (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall be very brief. Bolivia of course voted in favour of resolution 69/320. Although it is of a symbolic nature, symbols are very important. When the flag is raised in front of United Nations premises, it will be a permanent reminder of what the international community has done well and what it has so far failed to do for the Palestinian people. When we see the flag flying in front of those premises, we must remember the wall that is being built. When we see the flag flying in front of those premises, we must remember the forced displacement of thousands upon thousands of Palestinian men and women. When we see that flag, we must remember the usurpation of their land and territory. When we see that flag, we must remember the illegal settlements that have been built in Palestinian territory. When we see that flag, we must remember the Palestinian prisoners who are being held in Israeli cells. When we see that flag, we must remember those who have been wounded in the merciless attacks of the Israel Army on the Palestinian people. When we see that flag, we must of course remember those who have laid down their lives for the Palestinian cause, and above all, we must remember that the international community has not yet been able to give the Palestinian people what it needs: the definitive establishment of a Palestinian State.

The Acting President: I give the floor to the Permanent Observer of the observer State of the Holy See.

Archbishop Auza (Holy See): My delegation would like to make four points regarding resolution 69/320, which has just been adopted. First, the Holy See has always respected the 70-year practice and tradition of the United Nations, whereby only flags of Member States have flown at the United Nations Headquarters and offices. Secondly, the Holy See was not opposed to the introduction of the resolution, in accordance with the rules governing the General Assembly. Thirdly, with regard to the resolution itself, the Holy See respects and accepts what the General Assembly has just decided. Fourthly, my delegation reiterates the position of the Holy See on the two-State solution — Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security.

The Acting President: I give the floor to the Permanent Observer of the observer State of Palestine.

Mr. Mansour (Palestine): On behalf of the State of Palestine, I am honoured to address the General Assembly, following its historic vote on the adoption of resolution 69/320 on raising the flags of non-member observer States at the United Nations — namely, the flags of the State of Palestine and the Holy See.

We are grateful to all the Member States that supported the resolution and convey the deepest appreciation of the Palestinian people and their leadership for the honourable position they have taken on this most meaningful issue for our people. We also express special thanks to the sponsors of the resolution for their consummate support for this initiative, consistent with their abiding support for the just cause of Palestine. The votes in favour cast by member States today constitute a reaffirmation of the long-standing principled position of the international community in support of a just, lasting, comprehensive and peaceful solution to the question of Palestine, and in support of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including to self-determination and independence.

The General Assembly has today sent an important message to our people that cannot be underestimated, for it comes at a very critical time in their long journey towards freedom and dignity. The Palestinian people are in despair, as they continue to suffer under Israel's nearly half-century foreign occupation and as more than 5 million Palestine refugees in camps throughout the region continue to endure repeated tragedies, all awaiting the realization of their rights. Hopelessness is dramatically rising as Israel, the occupying Power, persists in the illegal colonization and siege of our land and the cruel subjugation of our people and, as the political process remains stalled and turmoil, conflict and extremism are spreading in our region, undermining faith in the rule of law, in the international system and in the prospects for peace.

Yet, even in the midst of these grim realities, we are proud to say that the will and spirit of the Palestinian people have not been broken. At this critical moment, as they have come to the international community once again peacefully appealing for support of the symbolic yet significant step to raise their national flag at the United Nations, we are grateful that this appeal has been so rightly fulfilled.

Today's vote is a reaffirmation of the legitimacy of the national aspirations of the Palestinian people, of their existence among the nations of the world and of their right to self-determination to be a free people in control of their lives and destiny in their own independent State. The General Assembly's adoption of this resolution will help to restore some hope to our people and leadership as they continue on the peaceful, non-violent, political and legal path that they have chosen and to which they remain committed to against all odds, so as to fulfil the rights of the Palestinian people, achieve a just and sustainable peace and secure Palestine's rightful place among the community of nations.

It is another step towards the fulfilment of the promise of independence made to the Palestinian people nearly seven decades ago, and repeatedly thereafter, which remains unfulfilled to the present day. It is another step towards redressing this historic injustice.

Today's vote is also a contribution to the international efforts to salvage the two-State solution based on the pre-1967 borders and in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations and the Arab Peace Initiative — a solution that has been gravely damaged by the occupying Power but which we nevertheless continue to strive for so that we may see the day when the State of Palestine and the State of Israel live side by side in peace, coexistence and security, thereby ushering in the dawn of a new era in our region and in our global community.

Today, with the support of the Assembly for this peaceful and legitimate initiative, the international community has reaffirmed our people's faltering faith in the international community's commitment to their just cause and reaffirmed the centrality of the role of the United Nations in this respect.

In 1974, the Palestine Liberation Organization, recognized as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, received a standing invitation to participate in the work and sessions of the General Assembly as an observer. That was more than four decades ago. In 2012, the Assembly adopted its historic resolution 67/19, which grants non-member observer State status to Palestine. This resolution today is yet another significant step in affirming the international consensus in favour of Palestinian independence.

In this year of the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, which has had the question of Palestine on its agenda since its inception, this step must be matched by concrete actions, without delay and consistent with the relevant resolutions and the standing political, legal and moral responsibilities to end the occupation and achieve the rights of the Palestinian people and a peaceful settlement, all long overdue. The international community must rise to the urgency of this matter to advance peace in a region where all trends are tragically to the contrary. The Security Council in particular must uphold its Charter duties and cannot remain paralysed, failing the cause of peace.

As we continue to exert all efforts towards that objective, we look forward with great anticipation to the day when the Palestinian flag will be raised at the United Nations — a moment that will surely be emotional and full of pride and unity for the Palestinian people. Of course, we know that raising our flag will neither end the occupation nor solve the conflict. We also know that our application for admission to membership to the United Nations remains pending before the Security Council and that much hard work remains to be done. But raising the flag will signal to our people everywhere, who are watching us tonight, that their freedom is inevitable and that the international community supports them in their journey towards justice, for their rights and for the independence of their State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Allow me to say a few words in Arabic to our people who are watching us tonight in Palestine and in the Middle East.

(*spoke in Arabic*)

We, the Palestinian people, await the day when the flag of Palestine will be raised at United Nations Headquarters at the end of the month and in the presence of President Mahmoud Abbas. We hope that on that day the flag will also be raised in Palestinian homes, schools, shops, farms, universities and institutions everywhere else appropriate so that we can thereby assert our commitment to putting an end to the Israeli occupation of our territory since 1969, to establishing an independent Palestinian State with East Jerusalem as its capital through the achievement of the two-State solution on the basis of international consensus. That will be a historic and eternal day in our struggle to have our legitimate national rights and aspirations prevail. The flag will fly with the flags of all other nations at United Nations Headquarters.

Let all of us work together so that that day will be one of dignity for our people, for our martyrs, for our prisoners, for the besiseged city of Gaza and for our beloved country, Palestine. I send a greeting to the people of Palestine from here at the General Assembly.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker on this agenda item.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 120?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 6.30 p.m.

United Nations A/69/PV.103

General Assembly
Sixty-ninth session

Official Records

103rd plenary meeting
Friday, 11 September 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kutesa .... (Uganda)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 118 (*continued*)

Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

Report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly (A/69/1007)

Draft resolution

The President: Members will recall that the Assembly considered, in a joint debate, agenda item 117 and agenda item 118 at its 55th plenary meeting, on 18 November 2014.

The draft resolution before us today, as contained in paragraph 68 of document A/69/1007, is the outcome of a lengthy and intensive negotiation process. I commend all Member States for their commitment to the negotiation process and for the spirit of compromise and flexibility exhibited by delegations throughout the negotiations. I pay tribute to the co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly, Ambassador Vladimir Drobnjak, Permanent Representative of Croatia, and Ambassador Wilfried Emvula, Permanent Representative of Namibia, for their steadfast leadership on this critical issue.

The revitalization of the work of the General Assembly has been one of the key priorities for the sixty-ninth session. This work is an important aspect of the broader efforts to strengthen and reform the United Nations, and the draft resolution contains significant steps in that direction. The draft underscores the central position of the General Assembly as the chief deliberative policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations. It strengthens the role and the authority of the Assembly, encourages improvement in its working methods and calls for strengthening the institutional memory of the Office of the President of the General Assembly.

I commend the consensual agreement reached on the need to ensure transparency in the selection and appointment of the next Secretary-General. The draft resolution stresses the need to observe the principles of inclusiveness and openness in the process of selecting the next Secretary-General, and invites Member States to consider presenting candidates based on the need for gender and geographical balance.

The draft resolution calls for my successor and the President of the Security Council to issue a joint letter to Member States soliciting candidates for the position of Secretary-General and to further circulate the names of the candidates submitted for consideration. The General Assembly will then conduct informal meetings with candidates, further contributing to transparency in the selection process. It recognizes that the implementation of Assembly resolutions is critical to the body's effectiveness and efficiency. I encourage all Member States to take an active role in following up on implementation to maximize the Organization's capacity to address issues under its three pillars, namely, peace and security, development, and human rights.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

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As we mark 70 years of the existence of the United Nations, we look back at the important milestones achieved during this session. This draft resolution is an important contribution to strengthening our Organization. I thank all members for their valuable contributions.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution entitled "Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly", which is contained in paragraph 68 of the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 69/321).

The President: I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

Mr. Van Den Akker (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its member States.

We welcome the adoption today of resolution 69/321, on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly. We would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's plenary meeting and for your engagement in the Assembly's revitalization process. We would also like to thank the co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly, Mr. Vladimir Drobnjak and Mr. Wilfried Emvula, and their teams, who ably led the negotiation process. We would also like to thank Mr. Ion Botnaru and Mr. Georg Zeiner, of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, and other colleagues in the Secretariat for their useful involvement. And we would like to highlight the constructive atmosphere that prevailed throughout the negotiations and to thank all the negotiating partners for their engagement in revitalizing the Assembly.

The resolution we have just adopted includes significant innovations and would not have been possible without the flexibility shown by all the States Members of the United Nations engaged in the negotiations. It can be seen as a milestone in the enhancement of the transparency and inclusivity of the selection process for the next Secretary-General. In that regard, the introduction of informal dialogues and meetings with the candidates for the position of Secretary-General is particularly noteworthy. Significant progress has also been made in other areas, such as the working methods of the General Assembly and its Main Committees.

On 22 June, the Council of the European Union adopted its priorities for the seventieth session of the General Assembly. They recognize that the revitalization of the Assembly is a key component in the strengthening of the United Nations as a whole, and it is with that in mind that I wish to signal our readiness to remain constructively engaged in that process.

Ms. Lind (Estonia): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group. The cross-regional ACT group consists of 27 small and mid-size countries working together to improve the working methods of the Security Council. We welcome the adoption today by consensus of resolution 69/321, and would like to thank the co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly, the Ambassadors of Croatia and Namibia, for their excellent work and dedication, and all our colleagues for the constructive spirit they displayed during the negotiations.

The ACT group would like to offer a few comments on the cluster that dealt with the selection and appointment of the next Secretary-General, as addressed in the resolution.

We are pleased that the Ad Hoc Working Group achieved a consensus agreement on ensuring that the selection and appointment will be carried out in a clear and structured manner, by first starting the process with a joint letter from the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Security Council containing a description of the entire process, and as a next step, by circulating to all Member States, on an ongoing basis, the names of the candidates for the position of Secretary-General. In our view, the decision to conduct informal dialogues and meetings with candidates contributes greatly to the improvement of the whole selection process.

In view of the importance of ensuring that the best possible candidate is appointed to fill the post of Secretary-General, the ACT group applauds the inclusion of clear and precise qualifications and criteria in paragraph 39 of the resolution. Together with the aforementioned procedural developments, that is clearly a strong sign of the increased transparency of the selection and appointment process for the next Secretary-General. The ACT group welcomes and strongly supports the resolution's provision inviting Member States to consider submitting the candidatures of women for the position of Secretary-General. We are also glad to see that the resolution reaffirms the role of the President of the General Assembly in actively supporting the process of selecting and appointing the Secretary-General and in monitoring and reviewing the Assembly's implementation of adopted resolutions. The ACT group also echoes paragraph 44 of the resolution in affirming its readiness to continue discussing all the issues relating to the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General in all their aspects within the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly during its seventieth session. More specifically, we very much hope for a thorough discussion at the next session of the duration of the Secretary-General's term of office and the option of a single, non-renewable term of seven years, while also taking into account the need to implement provisions from previous resolutions.

In conclusion, the ACT group would like to emphasize the importance of implementing the provisions of the resolution we have adopted today, and in that regard we hope for fruitful and close cooperation between the General Assembly and the Security Council.

Mr. Rycroft (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom warmly welcomes the adoption today by consensus of this landmark resolution 69/321. I would like to thank my Namibian and Croatian colleagues for all their efforts as co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly in shepherding through this important agreement.

I align myself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union on behalf of its member States.

On my first day as British Ambassador to the United Nations, I set out three principles that I thought should guide the selection of the next Secretary-General: a clear timeline, a transparent selection process and an opportunity open to all, no matter what their gender. It is therefore with great personal and professional satisfaction that I see we have made important steps today towards realizing those principles, particularly the first and second. Our welcome consensus moves us closer to realizing a more predictable and transparent process, and so we have started the race to find a person fit for one of the most important jobs in the world — a person who will guide us through the most challenging threats to our peace and security; a person who will oversee the most ambitious development agenda in our history; a person who truly is one for 7 billion.

We have taken three important steps towards realizing that goal. First, we have agreed to a joint letter from the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Security Council soliciting candidates for the post of Secretary-General. In doing so, for the first time in United Nations history we have agreed to establish a clear starting point and description for the selection and appointment process for this vital role. Secondly, we have agreed to maintain a public, consolidated list of candidates, held jointly by the Presidents of the Assembly and the Security Council. The days of smoke-filled rooms and of rumours and speculation on the runners and riders for the job are over. Through our consensus today we have brought overdue transparency to an archaic and opaque practice. And finally, we have pledged to hold candidates up to genuine scrutiny through informal dialogues with them that are open to all Members. We all now have the chance to test the calibre of those who put themselves forward, to understand their motivation and ambition and to challenge, question and cajole them in their bid for this highest of offices.

It is disappointing, however, that there was strong resistance to the participation of civil society in these meetings. As I said in my statement to the Ad Hoc Working Group in April, the United Kingdom wants to see a process that is open to all Member States, but also to observers and to civil society. That is why we are open to organizing an Arria Formula meeting with candidates that really is open to all.

There is always more to be done, and we have only just begun. A predictable and transparent process will fail without the broadest possible range of credible candidates. That must mean expressions of interest from the broadest possible range of men and women. I have said it before, and I will proudly say it again, that the United Kingdom believes that, other things being equal, it is high time for a woman to lead the United Nations. It is therefore incumbent upon us all to ensure that we have the broadest range of women competing for the role. We will never find the best candidate if we exclude half of the world's population. Let us all encourage the world's leading women to answer the call and apply for the role.

Let me conclude by again thanking you, Mr. President, for all of your efforts to ensure consensus on today's resolution, and in a fitting way to herald in the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations. I also want to thank the many groups outside the Hall — the advocates, the civil society groups and the many others — who pushed us along this path. In doing so we have together brought greater transparency to such an important task ahead of us.

Ms. Mejía Vélez (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): As speakers before me have done, I would also like to thank you, Mr. President, for your great efforts to ensure that we could today adopt resolution 69/321 by consensus. I also thank our colleagues the Ambassador of Croatia and the Ambassador of Namibia for their dedicated work to make this a success.

No doubt, this has been a historic General Assembly session. Member States worked throughout many long months of negotiations so that we could have a United Nations able to respond to the major challenges of the current world — and we did so through consensus. That is something interesting and positive about this year. After hard, gruelling battles we succeeded in agreeing the Sustainable Development Goals, which our Heads of State will adopt as Agenda 2030. And there are also promising signs about a climate agreement in Paris at the end of the year. Strengthening the United Nations is crucial to ensuring that the ambitious agenda we have set for ourselves goes beyond aspirations to become a reality over the next 15 years. Effective, inclusive and transparent work by the General Assembly is essential to that end, as you more than anyone else know, Mr. President, as you wrap up your year-long presidency.

In April, when Colombia proposed some changes to the draft resolution pertaining to the established process for the nomination and appointment of the Secretary-General, we set out five key points. The first was to re-establish the active role assigned to the General Assembly via its President by the Charter of the United Nations. The second was to democratize the selection process and to begin the process as early as possible and in an open and transparent manner. The third was to ensure that the permanent members of the Security Council, in a spirit of openness and transparency, present their candidates so that the Assembly could play its role in the appointment. The fourth was that the Assembly should publicly hear from the candidates so that all Member States could make sufficiently informed decisions — and that, as has been said here, constitutes historic progress. And the fifth, which I cannot fail to mention, is the promise held out by resolution 69/321 so that, for the first time ever, the United Nations can elect a woman to the post of Secretary-General.

I think that with that transcendent step with regard to the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General all Members are at last basing the eligibility of women on their professional and personal capacities. The time has come to consider selecting a woman for the post of Secretary-General. In that regard, the consensus adoption of today's resolution on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly is clearly a step in the right direction. I again thank the co-facilitators and you yourself, Mr. President.

Mr. Mendoza-García (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Costa Rica aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Estonia on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group. Allow me to make some remarks in my national capacity.

First, we appreciate the leadership and commitment of the Ambassadors of Croatia and Namibia, as well as the constructive work of all delegations. We are especially grateful to members of civil society, which played a crucial role in this process. Costa Rica is greatly satisfied with the adoption by consensus, under agenda item 118, of resolution 69/321, on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly.

From the beginning of the negotiations, Costa Rica participated actively in the process because it believes that to strengthen the leadership of the United Nations as the cornerstone of global governance requires first choosing the best candidate to occupy the post of Secretary-General from 1 January 2016. Since 1946, the process of the selection of who occupies the most important place in the international community has been characterized as being opaque and undemocratic. Costa Rica is determined to change that.

As a member of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, my country, along with Estonia, leads the efforts to establish a transparent, democratic and inclusive process that is consistent — as it currently is not — with similar processes at the highest level. We aim to further strengthen the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council, as a decision on the appointment of the Secretary-General is up to not only the five permanent members of the Council, but the entire membership.

Costa Rica is proud to have succeeded in including in the resolution an invitation to Member States to put forward women candidates for the post of Secretary-General. That political message is very clear in the resolution. Let us hope that it indeed is, for the time has come for a woman to be the next Secretary-General.

We are also encouraged that from this moment on, and for the first time in history, we will have not only an opportunity to learn the names of candidates and their records, but the ability to interact with the candidates themselves.

I understand that changes in the United Nations do not occur as fast as we would like. Today we are taking very important steps, but there are still crucial other steps to be taken. Despite the achievements of this year, Costa Rica will continue to work with the same enthusiasm and determination to generate the necessary political momentum for the Security Council to present the General Assembly with not one but two or more candidates, so that there can be an election and not a mere appointment process.

With a similar hope that we will generate more substantial changes in the short term, we will continue advocating to make the term of office for a single period of seven years in order to ensure the independence of the post. Re-election is not the best formula to ensure the determination and leadership we need right now for humankind. In these times of crisis, when so many lives hang in the balance, when instead of closing our eyes and our borders we should be opening them and acting with courage, our actions and decisions make a difference.

Mr. Luque Márquez (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Ecuador would first like to express its heartfelt thanks for the efforts of the Permanent Representatives of Croatia and Namibia, Ambassador Vladimir Drobjnak and Ambassador Wilfried Emvula, and their teams for deftly and with great patience guiding us to the outcome of our work, that is, the consensus adoption of resolution 69/321. We should also thank the staff of the Secretariat who supported this year's meetings of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly.

There is no doubt that we have made significant progress. The resolution recognizes the work of Permanent Missions in the context of the effectiveness of the General Assembly, and invites the President to conduct an informal meeting of the Assembly to consider ways and means to further enhance coordination between Permanent Missions and the Secretariat. The resolution also opens the way forward so that the Secretariat can make Member States aware of limitations that impede the proper implementation of resolutions regarding the Secretariat. The resolution urges the President and the Chairs of the Main Committees to continue to increase their consultations with Member States in order to improve the way in which the work of the Main Committees is conducted. And the resolution reiterates the importance of the Assembly meeting the opening date of its general debate in accordance with the procedures it laid down for itself.

The resolution also requests the Secretary-General to provide information as to gender balance and the regional origin of executive heads and the Senior Management Group of the Organization — an issue of particular importance for my delegation.

The resolution also reiterates the need to provide the Office of the President of the General Assembly with the human resources necessary to preserve its institutional memory.

There is no gainsaying that, for various reasons, the election of the Secretary-General was the most interesting theme in the debate this year. In addition to referring to the imperative need to implement rule 141 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, elements have been introduced advocating transparency in the process, such as the coordinated action of the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Security Council at the time of asking that nominations for candidates be put forward, and also ensuring that Member States on the list are kept informed of what is happening. As the resolution provides for informal meetings between the General Assembly and the candidates, my delegation would like to highlight the invitation in paragraph 38 that States consider nominating women to the post of Secretary-General. It is certainly high time for that. Indeed, we are lagging behind what has happened in many countries around the world that have had leaders of State or Government. It is time that we had a woman leading the United Nations as Secretary-General.

Those important transparency measures obviously have to be accompanied by others that affirm the active role, pursuant to Article 98 of the Charter of the United Nations, that the General Assembly must play when it comes to appointing the Secretary-General. For my delegation, the provisions of paragraph 44 are particularly important in that regard, namely, that over the next session we continue our discussions and continue to take decisions on issues such as, for example, the number of recommendations that it would be desirable for the Security Council to put to the Assembly, or the term of the Secretary-General's mandate. We are committed to holding conversations and debating and discussing those issues in order to arrive at decisions that can render more democratic the process of the appointment of the Secretary-General, or, better still, of the next woman Secretary-General.

During the current session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly, a goal of the delegation of Ecuador was the reaffirmation of the rights and prerogatives of the General Assembly pursuant to the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. That makes it the most representative body of the Organization, where all States are represented on an equal footing. Our purpose over the next year will be the same. We still have a long way to go.

Mr. Sobral Duarte (Brazil): Brazil welcomes the adoption by consensus of this important resolution 69/321, on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly.

This year's resolution introduces important changes to the process of selection and appointment of the Secretary-General, especially with regard to its transparency. The process will now be initiated by a joint letter of the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Security Council addressed to all Member States and soliciting candidates for the position of Secretary-General. The names of individuals submitted for consideration will be circulated on an ongoing basis. The General Assembly will conduct informal dialogues or meetings with the candidates for the position. More objective criteria have been set for the qualities expected of a Secretary-General. Member States have also been invited to consider putting forward women as candidates for the position. Those are all significant achievements. We were able to use a narrow window of opportunity to ensure that the next process of selection and appointment of the Secretary-General, expected to happen next year, will be more transparent.

In that regard, we would like to thank the co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly, Ambassador Vladimir Drobnjak of Croatia and Ambassador Wilfried Emvula of Namibia, for their excellent work.

During the negotiation of the document just adopted, Brazil also defended other proposals that, unfortunately, were not included in this consensual resolution. Important questions remain to be addressed. One is how to ensure a more active role for the General Assembly in nominating the Secretary-General, according to article 97 of the Charter of the United Nations, so as not to merely rubber-stamp a Security Council decision. Another is the possibility of the Security Council sending more than one name for consideration by the General Assembly. Moreover, although supported by a substantial number of delegations, language including a suggestion to discuss the duration of the appointment and the renewability of the term of office of the Secretary-General could not be included in this resolution for the sake of consensus.

Those are some of the questions that need to continue to be discussed. The process of the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General is of the utmost importance for the Organization. Brazil reiterates its commitment to improve that process in order to make it more inclusive, pluralistic and in tune with an increasingly multipolar world.

Mr. Percaya (Indonesia): At the outset, my delegation thanks and commends the co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly, Ambassador Vladimir Drobnjak of Croatia and Ambassador Wilfried Emvula of Namibia, for their important leadership and efforts in stewarding the group's proceedings.

My delegation has great expectations concerning resolution 69/321, which we have just adopted. It is our sincere hope that all provisions in the resolution will be implemented. In the resolution, we reaffirm the central position of the General Assembly as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations, as well as its role and authority in matters of concern to the international community. The resolution expresses the resolve that the role of the General Assembly will be strengthened in the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General and other executive heads, and that there will be enhanced transparency and accountability in the relevant processes. We also emphasize the need to continue strengthening the institutional memory of the Office of the President of the General Assembly through appropriate support in staff and resources.

This resolution is indeed very important, not least because numerous new elements pertaining to strengthening the Assembly have been highlighted. Indonesia congratulates all delegations that worked tirelessly to make it substantive and forward-looking. At the same time, we would like to underscore the imperative of political will by our Member States in ensuring that the Assembly is fully supported and enabled to perform its role as mandated by the Charter of the United Nations.

As we commemorate the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, we can all be proud of the achievements of the Assembly and its bodies in their various spheres. Yet we also know that much more needs to be done to overcome its shortcomings. Therefore, with the adoption of the resolution today, let us also pledge that we will all bring to bear our respective political capital and fully discharge our responsibilities to ensure that the General Assembly becomes a robust pulpit for the international community in order to make the world more peaceful, safe and prosperous for everyone.

Finally, Indonesia would like to reiterate that it will continue to play its role actively in the Ad Hoc Working Group, as well as in other forums, with the aim of revitalizing the General Assembly.

Mr. Dapkiunas (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The delegation of Belarus would like to thank the Permanent Representatives of Croatia and Namibia, His Excellency Mr. Vladimir Drobnjak and His Excellency Mr. Wilfried Emvula, respectively, as well as their hard-working colleagues. They were reasoned and firm and actively sought compromise without prejudice to impartiality. They also took a serious analytical approach to the negotiations — all of which allowed us to achieve a result that seemed improbable only a few months ago.

We would also like to note the important contribution by Non-Aligned Movement delegations in achieving a positive result in the negotiations. We thank the Algerian delegation and the coordinator of the Non-Aligned Movement on this issue for their consistency and the principled stands that they took in developing and promoting the position of the Movement in very difficult negotiations on revitalizing the General Assembly.

We are cautiously optimistic about resolution 69/321. Undoubtedly, the adoption of this resolution by consensus, against the backdrop of great interest in the subject and rather critical discussions, inspires hope. At the same time, we are convinced that ensuring any change in the Organization does not lie in the text of the resolutions — the problem of the non-fulfilment of resolutions is well known to everyone here. The necessary prerequisite for any change is practical cooperation, based not only on a will to convince partners — when we write — but also and, above all, on our ability to listen to others. Time and future events in the Organization will show whether we have really managed to reach an agreement.

Belarus welcomes the inclusion in the text of the resolution of proposals to democratize the process of nominating and appointing the Secretary-General. The need for secret votes when appointing the Secretary-General — in close compliance with the General Assembly's rules — and the establishment of gender and geographical balance when selecting candidates to that duty are also important. We assume that that balance cannot be established at a moment's notice, but has to be done gradually. We also assume that participation in this process by all Member States, with each one acting according to its capabilities, will allow us to strengthen the Organization in general, without going beyond the remit of the Charter of the United Nations. That is also the goal served by steps to optimize the working methods of the General Assembly and its cooperation with other United Nations bodies.

Over the past several months, the process in which we have been participants and witnesses has evidently yielded much more than just this direct result, that is, the document we have adopted today. It has also shown that, after 70 years of the United Nations, Member States have not lost the ability to at least sometimes go beyond the principled setting out of positions. They can simply sit and listen to one another and understand the wishes and expectations of others. That is the wonder of empathy, and our ability to move towards that miracle is what will determine the future of the Organization.

Mr. Normand (France) (*spoke in French*): France associates itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union.

We congratulate all Member States on the flexibility and constructive spirit that made possible this important outcome. I especially would like to congratulate the Ambassador of Croatia, Mr. Vladimir Drobnjak, and the Ambassador of Namibia, Mr. Wilfried Emvula, co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly and co-facilitators of the discussion, as well as their teams, for their commitment, which helped reach consensus on resolution 69/321. This resolution is important — even historic — because for the first time all Member States have agreed to strengthen transparency of the selection process of the Secretary-General. Specifically, the relevant innovations include the following aspects.

The joint letter by the President of the Security Council and the President of the General Assembly will issue a call for nominations. A list of candidates is to be published at regular intervals. Informal meetings are to take place between candidates for the post of Secretary-General and Member States. There is also an acknowledgement of the need to take gender into account in the choice of the top officials of the Organization and of the Secretary-General. And, lastly, States are invited to consider a set of criteria upon a candidate's presentation — including multilingualism. As it is for many other Member States, the latter is an important point for us. Those are major innovations that meet a legitimate aspiration to achieve greater transparency in the appointment of the Secretary General. We welcome that result, which encompasses the changes that we called for.

I would also like to stress an essential element that made possible consensus on the text, that is, that the result respects the broad institutional balance among the United Nations bodies as established in the Charter of the United Nations. Article 97 of the Charter, which stipulates that the "Secretary-General shall be appointed by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council", is not compromised by this outcome in the resolution.

I would also like to underscore how important it is that we have reached consensus on the adoption of this resolution and that we have been able to avoid the risk of a vote, which could have plunged the United Nations into an institutional crisis. This result shows that, by demonstrating a spirit of compromise, we are able to move forward together to achieve progress in our shared Organization by respecting the rules that regulate the relationship among the organs of the United Nations and ensure their functioning.

In conclusion, I would like to assure the Assembly of the support and commitment of France to implementing the results of this resolution in the General Assembly and the Security Council.

Mr. Drobnjak (Croatia): I would like to make a brief concluding statement on behalf of the two co-Chairs.

Resolution 69/321, which we have just adopted, is an important, far-reaching document that will be put to practical use very soon. It reflects the common position of all Member States, which strengthens its substance and reach. It meets the respective interests of Member States. But we can certainly go a step further and say with confidence that this resolution is above all in the best interests of the Organization. Allow me to make two brief particular points.

First, this resolution is a result of the long, tireless work of many Member States and their willingness to engage in a thorough, substantive debate on numerous crucial issues on the subject of the revitalization of the General Assembly, in particular those related to the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General. It was the willingness on all sides to compromise, as well as the common desire not to miss the opportunity on the eve of the process of selecting the new Secretary-General, that made this resolution possible. We worked on this resolution for many months, and the final results clearly show how much we can accomplish if we act and work together. The co-Chairs wholeheartedly thank all delegations for that.

Secondly, throughout our debate and exchange of views, both formal and informal, we touched upon many aspects of the pivotal issue of revitalizing the General Assembly. As the resolution before us demonstrates, some issues were successfully addressed and were the subject of appropriate, effective solutions. On the other hand, some issues were put on hold to be addressed properly during the seventieth session of the General Assembly and beyond. To put it simply, we have accomplished a lot, but our work on the revitalization of the General Assembly is not done yet.

Our debates were rich in substance and creative and included new ideas and proposals, thus contributing to the quality of this resolution. The crux of our debates is reflected in the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly

(A/69/1007), which remains an important point of departure for some aspects of our work in the future.

In conclusion, allow me once again, on behalf of the Permanent Representative of Namibia, my friend Ambassador Wilfried Emvula, and myself, to express our gratitude to all colleagues for their substantive and highly professional cooperation. We warmly thank colleagues from the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, especially Mr. Georg Zeiner, and we thank in particular the President of the General Assembly, His Excellency Mr. Sam Kutesa, for entrusting us with co-chairmanship and supporting us firmly throughout the process. We thank all delegations.

The President: I should like to express my sincere thanks to Ambassador Drobnjak of Croatia and Ambassador Emvula of Namibia, co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly, who so ably conducted the discussions and complex negotiations of the Working Group. I am sure members of the Assembly will join me in extending to them our sincere appreciation.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 118?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 34

Zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic

Report of the Secretary-General (A/69/973 and A/69/973/Add.1)

Draft resolution (A/69/L.89)

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Uruguay to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.89.

Mr. Ceriani (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for the delegation of Uruguay, which holds the presidency of the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic, to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.89 to the General Assembly.

We welcome the report (A/69/973) of the Secretary-General and its addendum (A/69/973/Add.1) on the activities undertaken by the Zone.

We recall that, through resolution 41/11, of 1986, the South Atlantic Ocean was declared a Zone of peace and cooperation, while the third Ministerial Meeting of the Zone, held in Brasilia in September 1994, adopted the Declaration on the Denuclearization of the South Atlantic. Those documents, in addition to the resolutions adopted in the General Assembly, firmly demonstrate the peaceful will and cooperative spirit of the members of the Zone.

At this session, we are introducing a draft resolution that sets out issues that are important for the Zone, as well as the actions taken since Uruguay assumed the presidency at the seventh Ministerial Meeting, held in Montevideo in January 2013, where the Montevideo Declaration and the Plan of Action were adopted. Those documents are still relevant and are currently being implemented.

Great efforts have been made, and the existing cooperation network among the 24 States parties to the Zone has been strengthened in many different areas. There is more to be done, and we are aware of that. However, that is precisely the purpose of this mechanism: to continue working for the benefit of member States and their peoples and to foster international peace and cooperation.

We hope that the eighth Ministerial Meeting of the Zone will be held in Cabo Verde in the near future and that we will pass on to Cabo Verde the privilege of leading the Zone for the next two years.

Mr. Sobral Duarte (Brazil): It has been more than 30 years since Brazil took part in the establishment of the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic by the General Assembly. Then as now, Brazil, together with South American and African partner countries, sought to bring about the consolidation of the South Atlantic Ocean as a zone of peace, free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

Since its inception, the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic has been consolidating those original goals. It has also been faced with the challenges posed by current global issues that are of interest to developing countries, such as sustainable development, South-South cooperation, disarmament issues and the fight against poverty.

Seven ministerial meetings of the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic have since 1984 resulted in the establishment of a set of principles for the activities of the regional arrangement. The most recent ministerial meeting of the Zone, held in Montevideo on 15 and 16 January 2013, enabled its member States to renew their commitments and pursue their efforts towards deepening cooperation in areas such as global governance, development, economic and financial issues, disarmament, peace and security, defence, sustainable development and climate change, oceans and marine resources, and international crime. Moreover, concrete cooperation initiatives were provided for in the Montevideo Plan of Action, adopted at that meeting, in the following areas: mapping and exploration of the seabed, protection and conservation of the marine environment and marine scientific research, air and maritime transportation, maritime safety and security, public security and transnational organized crime, as well as capacity-building.

These ambitious commitments and mandates adopted by our ministers reflect the increasing economic, political and strategic importance of the South Atlantic region for its coastal States in the context of current global, political and economic realities. We hope that our joint endeavour will continue to increase mutual exchanges between the African and South American peoples, who are bound by strong historical ties and cultural heritage.

Allow me to underscore the commitment of the States members of the Zone to avoid the militarization of the South Atlantic by reinforcing further cooperation aimed at fostering peace and development. These are the values that we seek to reaffirm through the draft resolution that is before the General Assembly today.

In concluding, I would like to express my appreciation to the Government of Cabo Verde, which has so kindly offered to host the next ministerial meeting of the Zone. I wish the Government of Cabo Verde all the best for its presidency and encourage States members of the Zone to actively participate in the upcoming ministerial meeting. I also wish to extend sincere thanks to the Government of Uruguay for the excellent work it has done so far during its presidency of the zone.

Mr. Mazzeo (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Argentina is proud to be a sponsor of draft resolution A/69/L.89, which has just been introduced by Uruguay, owing to our firm belief in the importance of the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic, which was established in 1986 at the initiative of Brazil, with the support of my country. My country's active participation in the Zone of Peace and Cooperation reflects its commitment to the universal values of international peace and security and to the sustainable development of the southern hemisphere.

We pay tribute to the leadership and the outstanding work done by the Government of Uruguay as President pro tempore of the Zone since 2013 and in particular convey our gratitude to the Government of Cabo Verde for offering to host the next ministerial meeting of the zone at a date to be decided later.

The Montevideo Declaration, adopted in 2013 at the seventh ministerial meeting of the Zone, reflected the convergence of views of the members of the zone regarding certain issues that are extremely sensitive, such as the need to continue to work to put a swift and unconditional end to colonialism in all its forms and manifestations. On that occasion, the members of the Zone expressed their concern at the continuing situations that negatively affect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of certain States members of the Zone. We support their endeavours in promoting the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes and the quest for negotiated solutions to the territorial conflicts affecting them.

The particular importance of the status of this Zone lies in the fact that it is not just an area of peace and cooperation but also a zone free of nuclear weapons, the result of an effort that flowed from the very ideal of peace and security that led to the birth of the United Nations itself, as well as the various regional and subregional organizations to which the various States of the zone belong. Here Argentina believes that although some countries are not members of the Zone, they are adopting a responsible attitude that is respectful of the goals of peace and security and of the commitments undertaken with respect to the ban on weapons of mass destruction that the zone imposed upon itself.

The Montevideo Plan of Action set out specific cooperation measures, in recognition of the many potential sectors for South-South cooperation. Thus the establishment of a Working Group on peacekeeping operations, pursuant to the Montevideo Plan of Action in 2013, is of great importance in that it provides an opportunity for deepening cooperation among the States members of the zone. Argentina therefore proposes to organize and host the first meeting of the Group, taking that opportunity to extend discussions to the full scope of issues related to cooperation in the area of defence.

Aware of its responsibilities in the area of search and rescue in the South Atlantic, Argentina has begun the process of joining the Medium-altitude Earth Orbit Search and Rescue programme of the Cospas-Sarsat satellite system through the establishment of two new earth stations on Argentine territory, which will significantly improve distress-alert reception times in the South Atlantic.

We are committed to protecting and preserving the marine environment and living marine resources, and marine science. The Republic of Argentina launched the Pampa Azul initiative in order to contribute to broadening scientific knowledge as the basis for conservation policies and the management of natural resources, and encouraging technological innovations applicable to the sustainable exploitation of natural resources.

In conclusion, we are grateful for the support that this regional initiative will receive, which reflects the active commitment of both coasts of the South Atlantic to social and economic development, strict respect for human rights, international law and international peace and security.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.89, entitled "Zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Zhang Saijin (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have also become sponsors of A/69/L.89: Brazil and Sweden.

The President: May take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/69/L.89?

Draft resolution A/69/L.89 was adopted (resolution 69/322).

The President: May I take it that is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 34?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 7 (*continued*)

Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items

The President: I shall now invite the attention of the General Assembly to draft resolution A/69/L.88, circulated under agenda item 68, entitled "Promotion and protection of human rights".

The President: Members will recall that at its 77th plenary meeting, on 29 December 2014, the General Assembly concluded its consideration of agenda item 68. In order for the Assembly to consider agenda item 68, it will be necessary to reopen its consideration. May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to reopen consideration of agenda item 68?

It was so decided.

The President: Members will also recall that at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 19 September 2014, the General Assembly decided to allocate agenda item 68 to the Third Committee. In order to enable us to take action expeditiously on the document, may I take it that the Assembly wishes to consider agenda item 68 directly in plenary meeting and proceed immediately to its consideration?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 68 (*continued*)

Promotion and protection of human rights

Draft resolution (A/69/L.88)

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Armenia, who will introduce the draft resolution.

Mr. Mnatsakanyan (Armenia): It is with pride, honour and a sense of duty that Armenia presents draft resolution A/69/L.88, entitled "International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of This Crime", on behalf of its 84 sponsors, to which Armenia is deeply grateful. It is the result of intensive consultations among the membership that have been concluded successfully in order to secure full consensus on the text. We appreciate the broad membership's engagement in the negotiations and the constructive spirit that has been displayed throughout the process. Today's draft resolution follows another initiated earlier by Armenia and adopted by the Human Rights

Council in March. In paragraph 22 of its resolution, the Human Rights Council recommended that the General Assembly proclaim this International Day, and I am glad that we intend to heed its proposal.

Millions of human lives have been lost as a result of the most horrendous crime — genocide — that humankind has, to its shame, demonstrated the capacity to commit. In its pivotal paragraph 1, today's draft resolution proposes to designate 9 December as an international day of commemoration and dignity of the victims of genocide and as a day for a collective reflection on the millions of human faiths, hopes and aspirations that have been shattered by despicable brutality, violence and hatred.

On 9 December 1948, the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Decades of deep analysis of the phenomenon of that crime and its root causes and consequences, carried out by a remarkable lawyer, Raphael Lemkin, resulted in empowering the international community with an important legal instrument for preventing and punishing genocide. The fact that in the decades since its adoption the international community has encountered repeated recurrences of genocide underscores how vital it is that we continue to take forceful collective action to prevent this scourge.

Ironically, as early as 1985, exactly 30 years ago, a United Nations human rights body, the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, in a landmark document known as the Whitaker report, initiated the idea of establishing an impartial international body concerned with preventing genocide. Shamefully, that and other recommendations of the report did not materialize at the time. The initiative fell on deaf ears, because apparently the immediate pressures of the day were a deterrent to an in-depth examination of the impending risks of the recurrence of genocide. Less than 10 years later, the international community witnessed its resurgence.

It took the international community a long time to reflect on what former Secretary-General Kofi Annan termed complicity with evil before tangible, albeit perhaps still modest mechanisms to prevent genocide were put in place. Together with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, and the joint Office he shares with the Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect, takes centre stage in the area of preventing genocide within the vast human rights protection system. Their commendable efforts have alerted us to the critical priority of early warning and early action in denying potential perpetrators the opportunity to commit this ultimate crime. But the fact is that we must make a major contribution to changing the culture of our Organization from one of reaction to one of prevention. We believe this International Day will serve as an important platform for prevention by way of commemoration.

The memory of the victims of genocide should help us to transcend our collective sorrow, compassion and guilt and turn it into determination to act together in order to free the world once and for all from this dehumanizing crime. The United Nations, through its members and throughout its entire system, must demonstrate its ability to lead us towards that objective. Besides tools and structures, what it needs most is will. "Never again" should have to be uttered only once. To quote the Whitaker report, "It has been rightly said that those who do not learn from history are condemned to repeat it".

Mr. Mnisi (Swaziland), Vice-President, took the Chair.

To the victims of our past inaction, the International Day will restore dignity. The denial of the sanctity of life to millions is the ultimate injustice. That denial of justice haunts generations of survivors, and we speak from experience. It shatters faith in accountability. It undermines the fight against impunity, which is as essential as genuine reconciliation. As ever, we are all collectively responsible for putting together the building blocks of a clear system designed to deny the capability for committing the crime of genocide to its potential perpetrators. It is the most appropriate way to pay tribute to the memories of its victims.

We call on all Member States to adopt this draft resolution by consensus.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.88, entitled "International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of This Crime".

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Zhang Saijin (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of draft resolution A/69/L.88, in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have also become sponsors of the draft resolution: Andorra, Austria, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, the Central African Republic, Colombia, Cyprus, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Fiji, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Lebanon, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine and Vanuatu.

The Acting President: May I take it that the General Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/69/L.88?

Draft resolution A/69/L.88 was adopted (resolution 69/323).

The Acting President: Before I give the floor to speakers in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by representatives from their seats.

Mr. Sana (Rwanda): Rwanda, as a country that experienced one of the worst genocides — namely, the genocide against the Tutsi, during which Hutu and other victims were also killed — attaches great importance to honouring the victims in dignity. Resolution 69/323, which was just adopted, has the merit of reminding the international community of its obligation to do so.

However, we believe that, in addition to an international day, commemoration has to be undertaken case by case, with the international community providing a specific date for each country that has experienced genocide. That is why Rwanda has decided to dissociate itself from the resolution. Our position does not mean that we are against setting an international date, but is intended to stress that victims should be given names, that each genocide should be called by its name, and that dates of commemoration should be set taking into account a specific day for each country.

Mr. Mukerji (India): I wish to express my appreciation and felicitations to the delegation of Armenia for taking this important initiative. I also thank the President of the General Assembly, the Secretariat and all delegations for their widespread support for the consensus that led to the adoption of resolution 69/323 today.

For my delegation, this resolution is a logical culmination of a process that began when India, Cuba and Panama co-sponsored, in response to the advocacy of Raphael Lemkin, one of the first resolutions of the General Assembly — resolution 96 (I), of 11 December 1946, which mandated the drafting of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. India is a party to the Convention on Genocide and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, both of 1948. We strongly endorse the principles of the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide. In view of the rights bestowed by the Convention and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we believe that the legal obligations to refrain from genocide are recognized as erga omnes. India has therefore extended its full support and co-sponsored today's resolution.

It is worth recalling that the catalyst for the General Assembly resolution calling for the Convention on Genocide was the horrendous genocide that occurred in Europe during the Second World War. "Never again" has been a yardstick for the international community since the United Nations was founded 70 years ago. However, on the ground, it is regrettable that crimes of genocide have not been prevented, especially on the continents of Asia and Africa, during the past seven decades.

This year, we mark the tenth anniversary of the World Summit of 2005, when the establishment of an empowered 47-member United Nations Human Rights Council was agreed to by all of us. We are glad that 170 Member States voted in favour of resolution 60/251, creating the Human Rights Council, which is a democratically elected and transparent body representing all the regions of our Organization. On this occasion, we call for making the Human Rights Council more responsive, in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, in providing early warning of situations where populations face the threat of genocide, so that the international community can act in time to ensure "never again".

The International Day that we have established through this resolution will give us the opportunity to commemorate the victims of genocide, and also express solidarity with the survivors of genocide. By recalling our moral and legal rejection of the crime of genocide, we will be able to strengthen our collective resolve to ensure that this pernicious act remains outside the pale of civilized human behaviour. Today, through the adoption of resolution 69/323 by consensus, India joins all the other States Members of the United Nations in reaffirming our belief in the Charter of the United Nations, in the dignity and worth of the human person, and in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small.

Mr. Mohamed (Sudan): I, too, wish to congratulate the delegation of Armenia for a job well done.

The Sudan welcomes the adoption of resolution 69/323, entitled "International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of This Crime". The Government of the Republic of the Sudan will observe the Day specified in the resolution for commemoration, which will definitely be an opportune and solemn occasion to recall acts of genocide committed in Europe during the Second World War and other parts of the world. Particularly, and as it primarily concerns the events in our continent of Africa, the Rwandan genocide of 1994 will be memorialized and the report of the Organization of African Union (OAU) International Panel of Eminent Personalities to Investigate the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda and Surrounding Events, submitted to the OAU Summit in Togo in July 2000, will be circulated, studied and reviewed in my country.

Regrettably, at the turn of this century and the dawn of the third millennium, a disturbing trend to use the universally agreed principle of the prevention of genocide for political ends can be discerned. This is the most serious threat that the international determination to fight genocide could face after the adoption of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 1948. It could be, by all accounts, the greatest disservice to the fight against and prevention of genocide ever since.

To vindicate this argument, I would cite the allegations and accusations against our Government and our nation of committing genocide in the western region of the country, Darfur, since 2003. In all objectivity, I will briefly confine myself to citing the testimony repeated worldwide, indicating that the events in Darfur before the conclusion of a peaceful settlement to the conflict in Abuja in 2006 and Doha in 2011 did not constitute genocide. I stress that I do so to caution against offending the dignity of the victims of genocide, especially in Europe during the Second World War, in Africa in 1994 and perhaps elsewhere.

First, in June 2004, the then-Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, said of the situation in Darfur, "I cannot call the killings a genocide".

Second, the International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur answered, "The Government of the Sudan has not pursued a policy of genocide directly or through the militias under its control".

Third, in July 2004, the African Union Peace and Security Council stated, "Even though the crisis in Darfur is grave, the situation cannot be defined as genocide".

Fourth, in December 2004, the then Organization of African Unity Chairman, Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, stated, "Now, what I know of the Sudan does not fit in all respects to that definition of genocide". Previously, on 23 September 2004, at a press conference at United Nations Headquarters, in New York, President Obasango stated, "That does not amount to genocide from our reckoning. It amounts, of course, to conflict. It amounts to violence".

Fifth, in August 2004, the European Union fact-finding mission in Darfur concluded that, "although there was widespread violence in Darfur, there was no evidence of genocide". A spokesman for the mission stated, "We are not in the situation of genocide there".

Sixth, in May 2004 the Arab League commission of inquiry to Darfur took the position that events in Darfur were neither genocide nor ethnic cleansing.

Seventh, regarding individuals and non-governmental organizations, during a visit to Darfur in 2007 former United States President Jimmy Carter said, "There is a legal definition of genocide and Darfur does not meet that standard". In 2004, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) said regarding Darfur,

> "By screaming the crime of all crimes, mixing military with humanitarianism to justify intervention, words do have concrete implication and offensive political interests".

Médecins Sans Frontières cautions that to continue with its job would entail "distancing ourselves from propaganda and resisting this era of confusion". In 2004, then-MSF-France President Jean-Hervé Bradol stated that claims of genocide in Darfur were "obvious political opportunism". It was that organization which asserted that incidents of genocide had taken place in Rwanda in 1994 and accordingly won a Nobel Peace Prize in 1999.

I conclude with the words of Mr. David Hoile that the misuse of the term of genocide is very regrettable. He said:

> "Crying wolf on genocide in Darfur can only but denigrate the memory of the reality of the Holocaust in Europe during the Second World War [and] encourage Holocaust deniers".

That misuse is, hopefully, what the present resolution intends to suppress. Again, while we caution against twisting this shared objective of prevention by memorialization, we confirm our support for the present resolution that has just been adopted.

Mr. Jabrayilov (Azerbaijan): Our delegation is taking the floor to explain its position on resolution 69/323, entitled "International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of This Crime".

Remembrance and commemoration of the victims of genocide deeply resonate with the people of Azerbaijan. It reminds us of a dark stage of our recent history that took place in Khojaly. Since 1992, each February we commemorate the anniversary of the atrocious crimes committed against the civilian population of the town of Khojaly, situated in the Nagorno Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

On the night of 25 and 26 February 1992, the town of Khojaly was brutally seized. The attack and capture of the town involved the extermination of hundreds of Azerbaijanis, including women, children and the elderly. Thousands of civilians were maimed and taken hostage; many of them remain missing. The town was razed to the ground. The level of brutality in Khojaly was shocking. Atrocities included scalping, beheading, the bayoneting of pregnant women and the mutilation of bodies.

The facts confirmed that the international slaughter of civilians in Khojaly was directed at their mass extermination only because they were Azerbaijanis. The agony of our people continues every day, undimmed by the passage of time. The people of Azerbaijan have been waiting for justice for 23 years. The continuous commemoration is also an important step towards determining the truth. Denial of the established facts is an insult to the victims. Denial does not make those facts go away. It does not change the past, and it certainly does not erase the memory of the people of Azerbaijan.

We believe that by putting forward this resolution, its main sponsor will come to terms with its modern history and recognize its responsibility for Khojaly. Only by unearthing the truth and recognizing the responsibility to bring all perpetrators to justice will we be able to move towards recognition and make our collective promise of "never again" a reality.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote.

I give the floor to the representative of Chile to make a statement.

Mr. Olguín Cigarroa (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall be brief. I wish to emphasize the significance of the initiative put forward by the delegation of Armenia, which Chile co-sponsored, to designate the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of This Crime, which we trust will contribute to our goal.

Genocide arises in split societies where there are perceptions and feelings of exclusion that fuel actions against particular groups and create conditions conducive to their commission. The strengthening of the rule of law, inclusive development and respect for diversity and human rights is an effective way of addressing the deep roots of many conflicts and preventing the commission of the crime of genocide. Prevention must be a central aspect of the responsibilities of the international community, particularly on the part of the Security Council, which must efficiently use the early-warning mechanisms available. In that regard, we welcome the Rights Up Front initiative of the Secretary-General and the work of the Office of the Special Adviser for the Prevention of Genocide and the Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect, as well as the prevention role played by regional and subregional organizations, local and religious leaders, women, young people, civil society and the media. I wish to emphasize here the role being carried out by the Latin American Network for Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention.

The responsibility to protect civilians against massive and general abuses of human rights resides first and primarily with the State, but the international community can help in those efforts and act when Member States — either voluntarily or for reasons of complete inability — do not meet those obligations, in conformity with the responsibility to protect defined in the 2005 World Summit outcome document (resolution 60/1). With that vision of support for capacity-building, Chile has organized regional and international seminars with the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect in Chile — such as the fifth annual meeting of the Global Network of R2P Focal Points on the need to protect, organized with Spain in July.

Faced with the crime of genocide, we must have international mechanisms and/or tribunals that can ensure accountability and prevent impunity. In that regard, we must stress the role of the International Criminal Court, which — let us remember — requires the full cooperation of States with the Court so that it may carry out its functions effectively.

Chile regrets the exercise of the right of veto by permanent members of the Security Council in matters pertaining to genocide, and we call on them once again to refrain from using veto in cases of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, and to support the proposal made by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, to which Chile belongs, with respect to a code of conduct for the restriction of the use of the right of veto in such situations. That would represent a concrete way of paying tribute to the victims of that crime, which is universally abhorred, and of achieving a world free of the threat and scourge of genocide.

The Acting President: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

May I remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Samvelian (Armenia): Resolution 69/323, which was introduced by Armenia, is about dignity — something that was missing from the statement made by the representative of Azerbaijan. In his statements, I believe that he neeeds to recall the genocide committed against the Armenians in Baku, Sumgait and many other places in Azerbaijan. We will therefore disregard the allegation made by the representative of Azerbaijan and call on him to demonstrate dignity and refrain from the trivialization of genocide.

Mr. Jabrayilov (Azerbaijan): I apologize for taking the floor a second time and would like to note the following.

Apart from considerable information emanating from the law-enforcement agencies of Azerbaijan, the responsibility of Armenia, including that of its political and military leadership and subordinate local armed groups, for the crimes committed in Khojaly has been reported, recognized and documented by numerous mass media organizations, human rights organizations, independent sources and eyewitnesses of the tragedy. Above all, the Republic of Armenia's responsibility for the crimes in Khojaly has been admitted by Armenia itself — by its high-ranking officials and the country's public sources. The following quotation from an interview with the President of Armenia, Mr. Sarkisian, with British journalist Thomas de Waal leaves no doubt as to the identity of the perpetrator of the crimes of Khojaly:

> "Before Khojaly, the Azerbaijanis thought that they were joking with us; they thought that the Armenians were people who could not raise their hand against the civilian population. We were able to break that stereotype."

In conclusion, it is extremely disappointing that, while initiating resolution 69/323 and speaking about the responsibility for and importance of remembrance, Armenia continues to deny its responsibility for Khojaly.

The Acting President: We have thus concluded our consideration of agenda item 68.

Agenda item 122

Multilingualism

Report of the Secretary-General (A/69/282)

Draft resolution (A/69/L.86)

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Senegal to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.86.

Mr. Ciss (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): I have the pleasure, on behalf of the sponsoring States, to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.86, on multilingualism, submitted under agenda item 122.

Access to information has always been a fundamental pillar of the United Nations. As we prepare to celebrate the seventieth anniversary of our Organization, that pillar is even more important in a context that is marked more than ever by the development of information and communication technologies. In that context, it is more necessary than ever before for the United Nations to take linguistic diversity into account so as to ensure that its message is heard by all the peoples of the world.

Accordingly, the draft resolution recalls the high priority of multilingualism in building a world that conforms to the ideals on which the Organization was founded — a world that strives tirelessly for peace, justice and freedom. That goal should be a catalyst for us to promote and strengthen parity among the six official languages while highlighting the importance of non-official languages.

From that perspective, the text underscores the responsibilities of the various departments and services of the Secretariat in the promotion and implementation of multilingualism. It also welcomes the appointment of a Coordinator for Multilingualism by the Secretary-General. It calls on the services and departments of the Secretariat to fully support the work of the Coordinator and on the Secretary-General to submit a report on that work.

To that end, the draft resolution notes the fundamental role that the Department of Public Information plays and underscores the importance of ensuring that all United Nations documents be published and accessible in the six official languages, including through the Organization's websites. In that regard, the draft resolution notes with concern the disparity among the official languages as well as among the non-official languages, as brought to light by the Secretariat's technical review. In that regard, the text urges the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps to correct those disparities.

Another challenge that is no less important or deserving of our attention is the conservation of the audio-visual archives that record the 70-year history of the United Nations. We welcome the completion of their inventory. The draft resolution underscores the importance of their being digitized in order to avoid their deterioration.

The draft resolution's text also recalls the provisions concerning mobility that were introduced a year ago to take language skills into account.

Multilingualism is also important to the quest for world peace, and the draft resolution notes the submission to the Secretary-General of the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (A/70/95), which was established for that purpose, as well as the report of the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture (A/69/968).

All of the aforementioned demonstrates the importance of multilingualism to achieving the objectives of the United Nations and how essential it is that we promote its implementation. It is a matter of equal dignity for all cultures and the effectiveness of the sacrosanct principle of the legal equality of all States and to the democratization of global governance. I can assure the Assembly that today's draft resolution will be adopted by consensus and sponsored by a significant number of countries, as has been the case in previous years.

Mr. Carrera Castro (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of Friends of Spanish in the United Nations, in our first address to the plenary of the General Assembly since the Group was established on 16 September 2013.

Our group recognizes the growing interest of the Spanish-speaking peoples in the work of the United Nations. That has had an impact on the activities of the Organization through its increased and sustained consultations and discussions among Spanish speakers all over the world. That is what has led us to recognize that language groups can have a direct effect on the activities of the United Nations. One of our main goals, therefore, has been to promote cooperation between the United Nations and the Group of Friends, bringing together the countries that share the Spanish language, so that we can promote the ideals, principles and purposes of the United Nations as well as their peoples' general welfare.

Our Group has also been particularly interested in strengthening its ties to other language groups within the United Nations, because we believe in diversity's richness and because multilingualism is the principle that unites us all. That is why we support efforts to fully implement the principle of multilingualism in the United Nations, and we consider it encouraging that the General

Assembly is reaffirming its importance with today's draft resolution (A/69/L.86). Once again, we reiterate our full commitment to achieving multilingualism at the United Nations, through the essential parity of use of the six official languages, equally and without discrimination. The Group of Friends of Spanish firmly believes that it will help to promote the mission of the United Nations and strengthen international support for its activities with the greatest possible transparency.

The Acting President: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/69/L.86.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Zhang Saijin (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): In connection with draft resolution A/69/L.86, entitled "Multilingualism", I wish to put on record the following statements of financial implications on behalf of the Secretary-General, in accordance with rule 153 of the General Assembly's rules of procedure.

In paragraph 41 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would reiterate the need to fully implement and observe rule 55 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, which provides that during the sessions of the General Assembly the *Journal of the United Nations* shall be published in languages of the Assembly from within existing resources. The current interpretation and practice with respect to rule 55 is that the *Journal* is published in the six languages of the Assembly during the main parts of the General Assembly, from September to December, while during the remainder of the year the *Journal* is issued in English and French only.

Accordingly, if the General Assembly decides to continue with the current practice reflected in paragraph 41, adoption of the draft resolution would not require additional resources under the programme budget.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.86, entitled "Multilingualism".

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Zhang Saijin (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of draft resolution A/69/L.86, in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Benin, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Canada, the Central African Republic, Colombia, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Georgia, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Iraq, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Mali, Monaco, Morocco, Niger, Peru, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia and Ukraine.

The Acting President: May I take it that the General Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/69/L.86?

Draft resolution A/69/L.86 was adopted (resolution 69/324).

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Morocco to speak in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted.

Mr. Laassel (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the francophone ambassadors, I would like to express the Group's satisfaction at the orderly negotiating process facilitated by the delegation of Senegal, which allowed consensus to be reached on resolution 69/324. The Group of Francophone Ambassadors is pleased to see the unanimous adoption of resolution 69/324. In this regard, I should like to thank the Senegalese delegation for having facilitated negotiations on the text and all of the delegations that participated in the negotiations, which made constructive contributions to enhancing the draft and strengthening its provisions, thereby consolidating multilingualism within the United Nations.

The resolution is an additional means for us to consolidate multilingualism by giving it pride of place among the efforts of the United Nations aimed at preserving cultural diversity through the promotion of the use of languages on an equal footing in the work of the Organization. The preservation of multilingualism within our organizations serves, among other purposes, to facilitate international communication and to ensure the broad and inclusive participation of States and stakeholders in multilateral actions.

The resolution that we have adopted today reinforces language that recognizes the key role that multilingualism plays in realizing the three pillars of the United Nations, namely, peacekeeping, development and human rights. In this respect, we hope that the implementation of the resolution will lead to the enshrinement of the principle of the equality of the six official languages of the United Nations and strengthen multilingualism in the texts dealt with and issued by the United Nations and in key documents published on the website and the various United Nations publications.

Finally, my delegation reiterates that the francophone Ambassadors are ready to cooperate with the United Nations and its bodies to implement the resolution and will continue to work to promote the principle of cultural and linguistic diversity.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 122?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 12 (*continued*)

2001-2010: Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa

Draft resolution (A/69/L.91)

The Acting President: The General Assembly will now take action on the draft resolution entitled "Consolidating gains and accelerating efforts to control and eliminate malaria in developing countries, particularly in Africa, by 2015 and beyond", issued as document A/69/L.91.

Members will recall that the General Assembly considered, in a joint debate, agenda item 62 and its sub-items (a) and (b), and agenda item 12, at its 26th and 27th plenary meetings, on 17 October 2014.

I now give the floor to the representative of Ethiopia to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.91.

Mr. Alemu (Ethiopia): I am pleased, in our capacity as Chair of the African Leaders Malaria Alliance (ALMA) Steering Committee, to introduce, on behalf of the African Group, draft resolution A/69/L.91, entitled "Consolidating gains and accelerating efforts to control and eliminate malaria in developing countries, particularly in Africa, by 2015 and beyond".

Over the past 15 years the world has seen tremendous progress on malaria control and prevention. Indeed, the number of children who die from malaria has fallen by more than 50 per cent, and the United Nations estimates that 6.2 million lives have been saved as a result of malaria interventions between 2000 and 2015. Fifty-five of the world's 99 countries affected are on track to cut malaria incidence by at least 75 per cent by the end of 2015. Nowhere has the progress been more remarkable than on the African continent. The World Health Organization reports that nine countries are on track to reduce malaria incidence by 75 per cent, and three additional countries are projected to achieve reductions of between 50 and 75 per cent by the end of 2015. The result is that 3.9 million child deaths have been averted in Africa.

African countries and their partners have mobilized hundreds of millions of dollars to scale up malaria-control interventions, including long-lasting insecticidal nets, indoor residual spraying, rapid diagnostic tests and artemisin-based combination therapies. Despite the success of this unprecedented scaling up of anti-malaria interventions, much work remains to be done, and many countries in Africa continue to experience sub-optimal progress towards national and international targets.

As we turn to the Sustainable Development Goals in aggressive pursuit of malaria elimination, we must address weak health-care systems and inequitable access to health services, ramp up domestic and international financing, and deal with insecticide resistance. Tools such as the Alma 2030 Scorecard towards malaria elimination, launched earlier this year, are essential in tracking progress towards malaria elimination.

The aforementioned draft resolution, adopted on an annual basis, is critical because it provides a rallying message and guideposts to keep partners such as the African Development Bank, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the World Bank, the Department for International Development, the President's Malaria Initiative and others to ensure that we build sustainable funding plans and ensure quality financial management, including priority-setting and accountability for results.

This year's draft resolution is consistent with the purposes and missions of resolution 68/308, adopted last year, while highlighting substantial and technical updates and new developments in the area. The new components are as follows.

First, the draft resolution recognizes the beginning of the Sustainable Development Goal era in the movement towards malaria elimination, further recognizing, in this connection, the need for additional funding for malaria interventions and for research into and development of preventive diagnostic and control tools from the international community.

Second, it welcomes the World Health Organization's global technical strategy for malaria, adopted by the World Health Assembly in May, and the Action and Investment to Defeat Malaria 2016-2030 plan of the Roll Back Malaria Partnership, launched at the third International Conference on Financing for Development, which together provide the framework to achieve a reduction in global malaria incidence and mortality rates by at least 90 per cent by 2030, which is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Third, it reaffirms the declaration of Alma-Ata, which was adopted at the International Conference on Primary Health Care, held in Alma-Ata from 6 to 12 September 1978.

Fourth, it acknowledges the progress made in Latin America in reducing the incidence of malaria, the progress made in parts of Africa in reversing the high burden of malaria and the success achieved in meeting the 2015 goals on malaria control set by the World Health Assembly, the Roll Back Malaria Partnership, the Abuja Declaration on Roll Back Malaria in Africa and target 6.C of Millennium Development Goal 6.

Fifth, it expresses great regret at the high number of people still without access to medicines and underscores that improving access to medicine could save millions of lives every year.

Sixth, it stresses the importance of improving community-based systems in the control of malaria, bearing in mind that families are often the starting point for effective health care for a child with fever.

Seventh, it calls upon Member States to promote access to medicines and emphasizes that access to affordable and quality medicines and medical care in the event of sickness, as well as the prevention, treatment and control of disease, are central for the realization of the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

Eighth, it recognizes the importance of innovation in addressing the challenges of eliminating malaria, including the role of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), in particular WIPO's research platform.

Lastly, it encourages the sharing across regions of knowledge and experience and lessons learned with regard to the control and elimination of malaria, particularly among the African, Asian and Latin American regions.

Before I conclude, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to the facilitators of the draft resolution for their hard work and leadership in bringing it into its final form. I would also like to thank all Member States that were involved in the negotiation process for their active participation and support. I look forward to the adoption of this draft solution by consensus, as in previous years.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.91, entitled "Consolidating gains and accelerating efforts to control and eliminate malaria in developing countries, particularly in Africa, by 2015 and beyond".

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Zhang Saijin (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of draft resolution A/69/L.91, in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors: Australia, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, India, Japan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America.

The Acting President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/69/L.91?

Draft resolution A/69/L.91 was adopted (resolution 69/325).

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of position, may I remind delegations that explanations of position are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Forés Rodríguez (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The text just adopted is of the greatest importance for the international community, especially for the peoples of Africa. On that continent, around 584,000 lives have been lost this year alone due to malaria. Most of these deaths occur among the continent's children, where every minute a child dies because of the disease even though it is preventable and curable.

Cuba joined the consensus on resolution 69/325, taking into account those factors as well as others of great interest set out in the resolution, out of the necessity of cooperating to confront malaria and support the countries facing it, which as developing countries do not have sufficient human, financial and medical resources to eradicate this disease, let alone the difficulty of gaining access to the international drug market for drugs or simply the gaps in health technology and infrastructure.

However, we would like to say, with respect to paragraph 40 of the resolution, which refers to initiatives on aid effectiveness — the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the Accra Agenda for Action and the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation — that those are not universally accepted agreements under the auspices of the United Nations. We believe that this is an attempt by developed countries to impose their vision on how to provide official development assistance to the countries of the South, thus obviating their historic responsibility to the developing world.

We reject attempts to legitimize or impose agreements reached by only a few countries. However, Cuba has always reiterated its willingness to rely on the principles and commitments set out in the aforementioned documents through an open and transparent process at the Organization and on an equal footing with all States Members of the United Nations.

For these reasons, Cuba declares that the part of paragraph 40 previously referred to is not consensus language, and we dissociate ourselves from it. We request that this statement be included in record of this meeting.

Ms. Argüello González (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): Our delegation welcomes the adoption of resolution 69/325. The issue of health is of paramount importance to our delegation as well as for our African brothers, especially with respect to a disease that can be prevented and cured and in whose complete eradication we can all play an important role. As stated previously, Nicaragua decided to join the consensus on the resolution.

However, we would like to be clear and on the record that our delegation did not support paragraph 40, with explicit regard to references to the documents on aid effectiveness, namely, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the Accra Agenda for Action and the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, since this language is not that of consensus. For that reason, we cannot accept it. We therefore dissociate ourselves from it and ask that our statement be included in the record of this meeting.

Ms. González (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): Venezuela welcomes the adoption of resolution 69/325, entitled "Consolidating gains and accelerating efforts to control and eliminate malaria in developing countries, particularly in Africa, by 2015 and beyond".

In countries where malaria is endemic, there has been a significant increase in efforts to prevent it and adequately respond to it, which has led to a decline in the number of malaria-caused deaths from 2000 to 2015 of approximately 47 per cent at the global level and 54 per cent in the African region. Venezuela, aware that preventive efforts must continue and that the gains made to date must be consolidated, joined the consensus on the adoption of the resolution.

However, we wish to make a statement on operative paragraph 40, particularly concerning the reference made to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the Accra Agenda for Action and the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation. Venezuela wishes to state here once again its position of principle regarding the aforementioned documents and express its disagreement with the fact that they were included in the resolution.

These documents were adopted in forums external to the United Nations system, with the goal of avoiding the obligatory aspect with regard to the goals and financing outlined in the area of cooperation. The inclusion of and reference to these in the resolution and in other documents adopted by the United Nations represent an attempt to impose illegitimate agreements that have not been agreed by consensus by the States Members of the United Nations.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela therefore dissociates itself from the references to the Paris

Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the Accra Agenda for Action and the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation in the resolution that we have adopted today. We ask that this statement be included in the record of the meeting.

Mr. Cadena (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): We all aspire to see malaria eradicated throughout the world. The Government of the Republic of Ecuador therefore has designed and implemented policies and programmes that have cut by more than 99 per cent the number of cases of malaria among our people over the past 10 years.

Having read the report prepared by the World Health Organization on malaria in 2014, Ecuador acknowledges the major progress achieved in reducing the global mortality rate from malaria by 47 per cent between 2000 and 2013. This contrasts with the deaths of more than 584,000 people in 2013, 90 per cent of them from the African continent, including 410,000 African boys and girls.

Ecuador joined the consensus on this resolution in recognition the importance of control activities and their positive impact on reducing mortality and morbidity, particularly infant and maternal, in our region and throughout the world; the need to fight even more vigorously against malaria in countries with a high incidence of the disease; and to recognize how tenuous are the advances made in in combating malaria, as they depend on appropriate and timely investment and resources in order to sustainably carry out programmes.

Ecuador, which is at present in the pre-elimination stage, deems it vital to continue and make progress in activities aimed at the control and eradication of the disease. On average, over the past three years more than 84 per cent of funding for malaria-control programmes was provided by the Government. We believe that greater funding participation from other sources would contribute to the sustainability of effective action to eradicate malaria in our country.

However, Ecuador believes that it is appropriate to express its view that the reference to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the Accra Agenda for Action and the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation in paragraph 40 of the resolution is inappropriate, as these are not documents agreed within the framework of the United Nations, unlike the reference to the Nairobi outcome document of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation. Therefore Ecuador deems that the reference to these three documents, agreed beyond the fold of the United Nations, does not constitutes consensus language, and we dissociate ourselves from its inclusion in this paragraph.

Ecuador asks that this statement be included in full in the record of this meeting.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 12?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 7 (*continued*)

Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items

The Acting President: I now invite the attention of the General Assembly to draft resolution A/69/L.77, entitled "Venue of annual sessions of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services".

Members will recall that at its 75th plenary meeting, on 19 December 2014, the General Assembly concluded its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda 24. In order for the Assembly to consider sub-item (a) of agenda item 24, it will be necessary to reopen its consideration.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to reopen its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 24?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 24 (*continued*)

Operational activities for development

(a) Operational activities for development of the United Nations system

Draft resolution (A/69/L.77)

The President: Members will also recall that at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 19 September 2014, the General Assembly decided to allocate sub-item (a) of agenda item 24 to the Second Committee.

To enable the General Assembly to take action expeditiously on the document, may I take it that the Assembly wishes to consider sub-item (a) of agenda item 24 directly in plenary meeting and proceed immediately to its consideration?

It was so decided.

The President: The Assembly will now take action on draft resolution A/69/L.77, entitled "Venue of annual sessions of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services".

I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.77 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Mminele (South Africa): On behalf of the members of the Group of 77 and China, I am honoured to introduce the Group's draft resolution, entitled "Venue of annual sessions of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services" (A/69/L.77). The Group of 77 and China would like to reiterate its long-standing position that the Executive Board's annual sessions should take place only in New York, rather than alternating between New York and Geneva, so as to broaden developing countries' participation in the decision-making process of its deliberations. The Group has therefore prepared a draft resolution aimed at resolving the issue, which is currently under the General Assembly's consideration.

The Group's principled position on finally resolving this matter is informed by the following considerations, among others. The first is that holding Executive Board sessions in New York will represent significant cost savings for the core resources of the United Nations Development Programme, which could then be utilized for programming activities of the United Nations development system. Secondly, it represents the recognition that in the past, the participation of developing countries in the Executive Board sessions of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Office for Project Services held in Geneva has been lower than in New York, which supports the Group of 77 and China's argument for the holding of such meetings at the latter venue, which is also that of the Headquarters of the United Nations.

We should therefore not lose this useful opportunity to reach finality on a long-overdue issue. If we are really serious about leaving no one behind, this is the only possible route to take. It would not be prudent at this stage to attempt to address the matter by coming up with any stopgap measures. We therefore need a positive decision by the General Assembly on this issue.

The Group would like to note with appreciation the role of the Government of the Swiss Confederation in facilitating the hosting of alternative annual sessions of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Office for Project Services at the United Nations Office in Geneva. We believe we will continue to count on Switzerland's support in development cooperation matters. That will be critical as we move towards adoption of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development and prepare for the upcoming quadrennial comprehensive policy review negotiations.

Let us all strive for a strong and revitalized United Nations development system. Taking a positive decision on the draft resolution under consideration today will be an important step in that regard.

The Group of 77 and China would like to bring the Assembly up to date on the original draft text. The updates and changes that have been made to it are the result of extensive rounds of consultations with our partners, and reflect our commitment to meeting on the middle ground that we all strive for.

The eighth preambular paragraph should read,

> "Recognizing that the participation of developing countries in the sessions of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Office for Project Services held in Geneva has been less than those held in New York".

The ninth preambular paragraph should read,

> "Noting the larger presence of missions from developing countries in New York".

The tenth preambular paragraph should read,

> "Recognizing that the primary focus of the United Nations development system continues to be developing countries".

The eleventh preambular paragraph should read,

> "Recognizing also the financial burden that the current system of alternating Executive Board sessions between New York and Geneva places on both developing countries and the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Office for Project Services".

The twelfth preambular paragraph should read,

> "Noting that holding Executive Board sessions in New York would present significant cost savings to the core resources of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Office for Project Services that could then by utilized for programming activities of the United Nations development system".

The thirteenth preambular paragraph should read,

> "Noting with appreciation the role of the Government of the Swiss Confederation in facilitating the hosting of alternative annual sessions of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Office for Project Services at the United Nations Office in Geneva".

Paragraph 1 should read,

> "Decides that all annual sessions of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Office for Project Services will henceforth be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York".

And lastly, paragraph 2 should read,

> "Encourages the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Office for Project Services to further discuss and continue existing arrangements to facilitate the participation of least-developed countries and landlocked developing countries in the annual sessions to be held in New York".

The President: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/69/L.77, as orally revised. Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of vote before the vote, I should like to remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Ms. Lucas (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the member States of the European Union in order to explain our position on the draft resolution contained in document A/69/L.77, entitled "Venue of annual sessions of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services", as orally revised.

The European Union is fully committed to making the United Nations system more effective and acknowledges the importance of the issue under discussion in the draft resolution. We realize that the question of the venue for the annual sessions of the Executive Board is part of a broader discussion that is currently under way within the framework of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of the United Nations system's development activities for 2016. The European Union would like to see this broader discussion of governance issues approached in an integrated rather than an isolated manner. We still do not understand why a topic that is a part of the broader context of governance has been removed from that context at this stage.

The European Union also believes that the Executive Board itself should have been the one to take a decision on the issue, and we regret that it was not in a position to do so. In our view, it is also regrettable that the discussions on the draft resolution began only a week before the closing of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly. At the last meeting of the Joint Executive Board, a solution to the problem under discussion was almost reached, but owing to time constraints, a decision could not be taken. In order to reach a consensus on today's draft resolution, and in a spirit of compromise, the European Union is ready to take part in negotiations on the issue. We would have preferred it, however, if the deliberations on the issue had taken into consideration what was discussed by the Executive Board in order to arrive at a temporary solution to the question of the venue for its 2016 session. We are sorry that that proved impossible.

For those reasons, the member States of the European Union are not in a position to support this draft resolution.

Mr. Lauber (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): The discussion on the venue of the annual sessions of the

Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services alternating between New York and Geneva is not new. In that regard, the secretariat of the Executive Board prepared a note in December 2014 on the advantages and disadvantages of alternating between New York and Geneva. As reflected in the Board's note, a request for additional information was made. The Executive Board was, however, not able to provide the information that had been requested. Nevertheless, during the annual session in June this year, a decision was negotiated, and consensus was almost reached, but in the end not achieved owing to time constraints.

During those discussions Switzerland participated in a constructive manner and demonstrated flexibility in supporting the apparent consensus. That is also why, in draft resolution A/69/L.77, which is before us today, we have asked for the incorporation of amendments based on that consensus, as proposed by the delegation of the United States of America. I remind everyone that this proposal for consensus would mean holding the annual session of the Council in 2016 in New York instead of Geneva, as an exception. We would then take an informed decision with regard to alternation as part of the broader discussions on governance that will take place during the dialogue in the Economic and Social Council on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system.

We would like to make three important comments on the process that has brought us here today.

First, we are in favour of respecting institutional procedures. The General Assembly should examine the question of alternating the venues on the basis of a proposal drawn up by a decision of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, and approved by a resolution of the Economic and Social Council. An approach to good governance implies that the organizations concerned be consulted and be able to provide their recommendations. In the current case, neither the Executive Board nor the Economic and Social Council have issued a decision on the matter.

Secondly, we believe that such a decision should be based on substantive information. To that end, we have asked for an analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of alternating the venues, but the information provided by the Secretariat remains clearly insufficient for that purpose. In fact, the difference in cost between holding the meetings in New York and in Geneva was not demonstrated.

Finally, we are convinced that the considerations of governance should be dealt with jointly, and not in isolation. The issue of alternation falls under governance and the functioning of the Council. Several aspects of governance will be discussed during the Council's dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system. We think that it is simply premature to take a decision at this stage, given that many questions remain open, and that is particularly so in the context of the future implementation of the new sustainable development agenda from now until 2030.

On that basis, Switzerland will vote against the draft resolution proposed by the Group of 77 and China. We regret that the texts proposed based on the draft consensus from June were not taken into account.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote before the vote.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.77, entitled "Venue of annual sessions of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services", as orally revised.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zimbabwe

Against:

Australia, Austria, Canada, France, Germany, Israel, Japan, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Andorra, Armenia, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Gabon, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine

Draft resolution A/69/L.77, as orally revised, was adopted by 103 votes to 11, with 38 abstentions (resolution 69/326).

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to the speakers in explanation of vote, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Erdman (United States of America): My delegation deeply regrets that resolution 69/326 came to a vote. It was not necessary. The United States of America voted against the resolution for reasons of principle, procedure and substance. Let me be very clear, the United States has no objection whatsoever to the legitimate concerns of our Group of 77 colleagues about the costs of holding the Executive Board annual session in Geneva every other year. In fact, we share those concerns. We support moving the annual session to New York in June 2016. And we support making that change permanent in the context of the quadrennial omprehensive policy feview. Let me repeat, we support moving the annual session to New York in June 2016, and we support making that change permanent in the context of the review. But it needs to be done in a way that supports the United Nations system and the role of its organs, its agencies, its executive boards and its long-established procedures. It is therefore doubly unfortunate that a reasonable compromise, which was supported by many delegations and would have achieved the desired outcome in a way that addressed procedural concerns, was rejected.

My delegation firmly believes, and has consistently stated, that the subject of the venue of the Executive Board meetings, like other critical topics affecting the United Nations development system, including its functions, its funding practices, governance structures, partnership approaches, organizational arrangements, capacity and impact, should be debated and decided permanently by Member States in the quadrennial comprehensive policy review to take place in the fall of 2016. That way, all Member States will benefit from the ongoing substantive discussions on those interrelated issues in the dialogue of the Economic and Social Council on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system. And every country's concerns can be heard and addressed in a balanced and strategic manner.

We are also concerned that resolution 69/326, adopted today, makes no reference whatsoever to the Executive Boards, or to the Economic and Social Council for that matter, and that the General Assembly did not wait to take the views of those bodies into account prior to adopting the resolution adopted today, thereby disregarding the oversight role of those two critical bodies. We also note that the final paragraph of the resolution appears to contradict the stated purpose of the resolution, namely, to direct any cost savings from travel to United Nations development programmes — a goal that my cost-conscious delegation supports.

My delegation has engaged constructively on this issue, both in the Executive Board and in deliberations on the resolution. We have consistently worked to identify a path towards consensus. In the light of the significant consensus we all worked so long and hard to reach in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which all of our leaders will endorse in just two weeks, we deeply regret the failure to reach consensus on this resolution. As we embark upon building a global partnership for development — which by its nature will require good faith, cooperation and win-win outcomes — we can do better than this.

Mr. Henderson (Australia): Australia has some sympathy with the issues raised in the substantive proposals to reconsider the venue of the annual sessions of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)/United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). We believe that that discussion should take into account the range of related issues, and we are prepared to work with Member States to address those issues through the appropriate channels.

We are deeply concerned, however, that resolution 69/326 was not endorsed through the Executive Board decision-making processes and was introduced in the General Assembly without sufficient time to build consensus. Australia greatly values the consensus-based decision-making that has been the long-standing approach of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Executive Board. Presenting a resolution on Board matters that does not enjoy consensus undermines the vital governance roles played by the Executive Board and sets a dangerous precedent for how we resolve important decisions about the governance and operations of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS. We would not want to see such an approach taken again.

Mr. Vestrheim (Norway): Like previous speakers, we regret that there was no real willingness to reach consensus in the matter before us. While we have sympathy with the desire to reconsider the venue of the annual sessions of the Executive Board, we believe that the issue should have been considered as part of the Economic and Social Council dialogues and the upcoming auadrennial omprehensive policy feview discussions. We also believe that resolution 69/326 procedurally undermines the authority of the Executive Board, as it brings in issues for the General Assembly's consideration without previous decisions by the Executive Board. That is all the more worrisome inasmuch as the resolution has budgetary implications that are of concern for the Organization.

We underline the importance of ensuring a well-functioning Executive Board in order to enable Member States to trust the organizations with their contributions. We equally emphasize the importance of respecting the principle of consensus in the governance of the United Nations funds and programmes, which are entirely funded by voluntary contributions. We are all well aware of the critical level of core funding — for example, to the United Nations Development Programme. Only by aways seeking consensus will we be able to mobilize the necessary funding.

Mr. Minami (Japan): At the outset, we have much sympathy for the legitimate concerns raised by the Group of 77 and China. However, Japan deeply regrets that resolution 69/326 was put to a vote. We place great importance on the effective functioning of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)/United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) Executive Board. We respect its established practices and its rules of procedure. During the informal negotiations on the venue of the annual sessions of the Executive Board held at the previous annual session in June, Japan served as the facilitator, with the hope of reaching consensus among Member States. We came very close to a consensus, but unfortunately, we did not come to one by the end of the June session. It is our view that the issue of the venue of the annual sessions should have been discussed and decided by the Board itself. It is also our view that the decision of the Board should have been recommended to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council. It is therefore regrettable that such a non-consenusal resolution was submitted at this session of the General Assembly in spite of the efforts we had made to achieve consensus at the previous Board session in June.

Additionally, as was explained by many other delegations, the issue of the venue of the Executive Board session should have been discussed in a holistic manner, not in an isolated manner, in the context of the governance of the United Nations development system. We deeply regret that we were obliged to vote against the resolution in order to express our disappointment with the way it was pushed forward without adequately listening to and accommodating other views and opinions.

As the former facilitator in the Executive Board, we feel that this issue could have been discussed in other forums, such as the Economic and Social Council dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system. We also feel that we would have been able to come up with other innovative options.

Lastly, I would like to stress that the procedure used in this vote is not helpful to confidence-building among the Member States of the Executive Board of the UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, although we are committed to working with the Member States in the coming Executive Board meetings of those three organizations.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote after the voting.

I shall now give the floor to speakers who wish to make statements following the voting.

Ms. Naeem (Maldives): The Maldives would like to make a this general statement on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States following the adoption of resolution 69/326, entitled "Venue of annual sessions of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services".

As co-sponsors, we fully subscribe to the resolution. Many of our members cannot afford to maintain Permanent Missions in Geneva, and we are therefore vastly underrepresented in all of the Geneva processes. Holding all meetings in New York would certainly enhance our access to, and participation in, those meetings, which are of crucial importance to the sustainable development of small island developing countries. Given the existing practices and within the relevant mandates of the Assembly, we urge that our limitations also be fully taken into account in the further consideration of existing arrangements, so as to facilitate our participation in Executive Board meetings, as outlined in paragraph 2 of the resolution just adopted.

Mr. Gupta (India): We would like to begin by first complimenting the facilitator of resolution 69/326, the delegation of South Africa, for having so ably spearheaded the process of consultations over the past month since 21 July, when the draft resolution was submitted. My delegation would like to take this opportunity put in perspective the process, the history, the facts and rationale of how the process evolved and reached this stage.

It was last year at the June session in Geneva that the issue was first raised by my delegation, as well as by the Group of 77, that there has been inadequate representation of developing countries when such sessions were held in Geneva. As a matter of fact, merely six countries from developing groups were able to go from New York to attend those sessions.

Upon the conclusion of the sessions in Geneva, the Group of 77 made a considered submission in July of last year to the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme to bring this matter to the consideration of all Board members. However, no action or response followed for nearly a year. Even at the June Board meeting this year, when the matter was not included in the agenda our delegation tried to engage constructively so as to get a resolution of the matter. However, middle ground could not be found owing to issues based on differences in perspectives, which led to the current situation. Since then, the Group of 77 and China, including my delegation, held at least four rounds of informal consultations with our partners on the subject, including yesterday, wherein every attempt was made to incorporate the updates and suggestions so as to further strengthen the resolution and take views on board.

In terms of the concerns that have been raised, which pertain, first, to this being a governance issue, we have consistently said that the issue of holding meetings in a particular place was decided through a stand-alone General Assembly resolution in the first place, and not through the relevant resolution of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission. Therefore, that mandate of the General Assembly needs to be respected.

We have also said that we have already spent nearly one and a half years on this subject, and therefore we have allowed enough time to discuss all the pros and cons of the subject meaningfully and to consider all sides.

We also believed that this particular step would be a meaningful step for the entire United Nations development system in pursuit of cost savings and would be extremely beneficial for developing countries, as the savings could be used for programming activities in developing countries.

Our delegation and the Group of 77 reached out and held extensive consultations at all stages and tried to reach middle ground on the resolution. We were hoping for a consensus solution and made all possible efforts in that regard. A result was reached today, and we hope that it will help further to focus the activities of the United Nations Development Programme in prioritizing its programmes and projects towards developing countries where the need is most felt.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker on the list.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 24 and of agenda item 24 as a whole?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.